MAHĀMUDRĀ

THE OCEAN of DEFINITIVE MEANING



THE NINTH GYALWANG KARMAPA, WANGCHUK DORJE

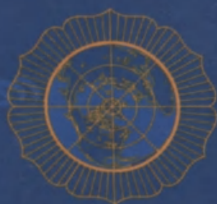
FOREWORD BY
H.H. THE SEVENTEENTH GYALWANG KARMAPA


H.H. The Seventeenth Karmapa

Wangchuk Dorje, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa, was born in Kham, eastern Tibet, in 1556. He was recognized in accordance with the prediction of his predecessor, Mikyo Dorje, by the fourth Situpa, Chökyi Gocha, and the fifth Shamarpa, Konchok Yenlak. In his youth he traveled widely throughout Tibet studying and practicing, principally under the guidance of Konchok Yenlak. In his later years he established and restored numerous monasteries in Kham, U, and Tsang and greatly increased the size of Tsurphu monastery, the seat of the present seventeenth Gyalwang Karmapa.

Wangchuk Dorje composed three important texts on mahāmudrā. The most extensive is *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, followed by the medium-length *Dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance*, and the shortest, *Pointing a Finger at the Dharmakāya*. He was also the author of summaries, now lost, of Mikyo Dorje's lengthy commentaries on the sūtras and tantras.

The Ocean of Definitive Meaning is one of the most extensive texts on mahāmudrā in the Kagyü tradition. Divided into teaching sessions and meditation sessions, it provides teachers and students with a systematic approach to some of the highest practices in the Kagyü tradition. Its thorough coverage of the entire path—from the preliminary practices through the four yogas, which culminate in complete awakening—is interspersed with the pithy statements of the great Indian siddhas and Tibetan masters of mahāmudrā, making this an invaluable text for all serious students of mahāmudrā, the definitive meaning.





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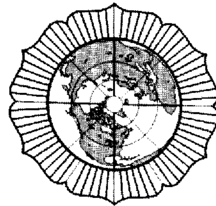
MAHĀMUDRĀ
THE OCEAN OF DEFINITIVE MEANING

The Profound Instructions on Connate Union:
The Radiant Activity of the Essence of
the Ocean of Definitive Meaning

by the Ninth Gyalwang Karmapa
Wangchuk Dorje

Foreword by
H. H. the Seventeenth Gyalwang Karmapa
Ugyen Trinley Dorje

Translated according to the teachings of
Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche and
The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche
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Front cover photograph of thangka courtesy of Chris Fynn.
Dedication photograph of the 16th Karmapa courtesy of Karma Triyana Dharmachakra.

NOTICE OF RESTRICTION

At the request of Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche and in consultation with the masters of the Kagyü lineage, *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* is restricted to those who have received the fourfold pointing-out instructions (pointing out the nature of mind on the basis of appearances) as presented by Wangchuk Dorje in his three texts on mahāmudrā. It is also strongly recommended that students first receive the reading transmission (*lung*) and study the text systematically under the guidance of a qualified guru. As a genuine practitioner, please respect this.

> May the glorious wisdom protector Bernakchen and consort, with their retinues, be the guardians of these teachings. If those who have no faith, those who have no connection, or those who, on the basis of the words [of the text] alone, claim to have developed [experiences] in their mind-stream and thus deceive themselves and others by lying about their attainments, [if such as these] see or spread [these teachings], may [the protectors] severely punish them.
>
> For those who practice properly and have faith, may [the protectors] assist them, so that simply by seeing [these teachings], their experiences and realizations will increase and they will attain the siddhi of Vajradhara in this very lifetime, with this very body.

The Ninth Gyalwang Karmapa
Wangchuk Dorje



This book is dedicated to the Sixteenth Gyalwang Karmapa,
Rangjung Rikpe Dorje,

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Introduction to Mahāmudrā

by

The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche

I am delighted to present this translation of *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, or, as we refer to it in Tibetan, *Ngedön Gyamtso*. The full title of this sixteenth-century text is *The Profound Instructions on Connate Union: The Radiant Activity of the Essence of the Ocean of Definitive Meaning.*[1] This is one of the three renowned instruction books by the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje (1556–1603), a great Mahāmudrā master in the Kagyü lineage.

The Ocean of Definitive Meaning contains the most detailed and direct oral instructions on mahāmudrā meditation ever put into writing. This extraordinary classic instruction treatise is known for its lucidity and its original Kagyü lineage style, and serves as a step-by-step personal guide to the Mahāmudrā tradition.

NOTICE TO THE READER

All readers should closely heed and respect the restrictions on using this instruction treatise set forth by the author, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa, and other living lineage masters. I personally request that each person properly follow these guidelines for the benefit of themselves and others. To follow the mahāmudrā path correctly, it is necessary to find a qualified lineage master and receive from him or her the transmissions and instructions on these practices. Most important of all is to receive the mahāmudrā pointing-out instructions as set forth in this treatise. I appreciate your concern, truthfulness, and respect for this most vital, profound, and true path of our spiritual journey, the mahāmudrā practices.

MAHĀMUDRĀ

The Sanskrit term *mahāmudrā* is *chak gya chenpo* (*phyag rgya chen po*) in Tibetan. The meaning of the Tibetan *chak gya chenpo* is explained in many different ways in our tradition, one of the principal sources for these explanations being the *Mahāmudrātilaka Tantra.*[2] Overall, *chak gya chenpo* traditionally comprises three

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1. ལྷན་ཅིག་སྐྱེས་སྦྱོར་གྱི་ཟབ་ཁྲིད་ངེས་དོན་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་སྙིང་པོ་ཕྲིན་ལས་འོད་འཕྲོ། *Lhan cig skyes sbyor gyi zab khrid nges don rgya mtsho'i snying po phrin las 'od 'phro.*

aspects, found in the meaning of the syllables: *chak, gya,* and *chenpo*.

The first syllable, *chak*, refers to "emptiness" (*shūnyatā*) and the experience of emptiness, which in the Mahāmudrā tradition must become personal and genuine. *Chak* thus stands for the innermost awareness or insight of shūnyatā, the realization of the inseparability of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa in their nature of emptiness.

The second syllable, *gya*, literally means "seal" or "symbol." In its deeper sense, *gya* refers to the unaltered, unfabricated, or unconditioned nature of wisdom: the experience of going beyond saṃsāric existence, of freedom from the subtle fetters of complexities. *Gya* signifies the intrinsic quality or abiding reality of all things, which transcends duality. It is the primordial purity that encompasses everything.

The third syllable, *chen[po]*, means "great" or "pervading." The fundamental nature of mind is all-pervasive and the nature of everything. It is the union of emptiness and wisdom. *Chenpo* signifies the union of skillful means (*upāya*) and wisdom (*prajñā*), and the realization that this freedom is innate in the true nature of reality.

Maitrīpa[3] explains the definition of mahāmudrā in this way:

> Mahāmudrā is nondual awareness that transcends intellect; it is nonconceptual, lucid, like all-pervading space. Though manifesting boundless compassion, it is devoid of self-nature. It is like the reflection of the moon on the lake's surface. It is lucid and undefinable, without center or circumference, unstained, undefiled, and free from fear and desire. Like the dream of a mute, it is inexpressible.[4]

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2. *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra*, Tib. *Phyag chen thig le'i rgyud*.
3. Maitrīpa, a great Indian mahāsiddha, transmitted the mahāmudrā lineage to Marpa, the great translator.
4. Dakpo Tashi Namgyal quotes this in his *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā* (Tib. *Phyag chen zla ba'i 'od zer*), which is published by Shambhala as *Mahāmudrā: The Quintessence of Mind and Meditation*, translated by Lobsang Lhalungpa. This quotation is found on p. 95 of the translation.

Thus the essential nature of mahāmudrā is often described to be like all-encompassing space; it rests nowhere and is free from all conceptions.

I. Two Approaches to the Realization of Mahāmudrā

In the tradition of the Kagyü lineage, there are two main approaches to attaining the realization of mahāmudrā: the path of method or skillful means, the Vajrayāna tantric path of elaborate and rich methods; and the path of liberation, the mahāmudrā path of simplicity leading directly to liberation. The latter is connected to and primarily based on the Sūtrayāna approach, though with a distinct Vajrayāna flavor. The ninth Karmapa explains:

> [T]here are, in accordance with the faculties and mental levels of individuals, numerous modes of explanation for the practice of the profound instructions. The exalted Dakpo Rinpoche [Lord Gampopa] guided students who were worthy recipients by using, from among such [approaches], the path of method (*thabs lam*) that was transmitted by the exalted Milarepa. He guided the majority using the gradual path (*lam rim*) that was transmitted in the Kadampa [tradition]. All of those [numerous modes of instruction] should follow [one of] these [two approaches]. The Kadampa lineage contains three transmissions: the lineage of vast conduct, the lineage of the profound view, and the lineage of practice [based on] blessings. Since the latter was transmitted by Tilopa and Nāropa, [all of these approaches], in fact, definitely come down to the same point.[5]

II. Three Classifications of Mahāmudrā

According to the teachings and tradition of Lord Gampopa's lin-

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5. *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, p. 4 (references to the text will be designated henceforward as "p." without restating the book title).

eage, there are three classifications of mahāmudrā: (1) sūtra mahāmudrā, (2) mantra mahāmudrā, and (3) essence mahāmudrā. Sūtra mahāmudrā is primarily based on the sūtra teachings, and mantra mahāmudrā primarily on the mantra teachings. Essence mahāmudrā draws from both sūtra and mantra, and in this sense can be included within sūtra and mantra mahāmudrā, but is traditionally distinguished as the devotional path based on blessings.

In particular, within the Kagyü lineage instructions, this devotional path of mahāmudrā is separately classified and described as the "single white remedy" or "all-curing single white panacea,"[6] because it can fully dispel all obscurations. This is reflected in Gampopa's instructions to the first Karmapa, Düsum Khyenpa:

> Moreover, one day [Düsum Khyenpa] told [Gampopa] that he would like to request the Path of Means [Vajrayāna instructions].
>
> [Gampopa] replied: "That very thing that I always teach will do. If you don't meditatively cultivate that, then in the intermediate stage (*bar do*) it will not help even if you know the practical instructions. If you, too, are able to cultivate that still more, it will suffice to foster just that. Also at the time of the intermediate stage it should be cultivated. The Clear Light will follow it. The natural Clear Light will come out to welcome [you] in advance."
>
> [Düsum Khyenpa then] asked: "If I am able to cultivate [it], will that suffice?"
>
> [Je Gampopa] replied: "The '[single] White [Remedy]' refers to that. I, too, have nothing besides that."[7]

6. Tib. *dkar po chig thub*.
7. Gampopa, *Instructions to Düsum Khyenpa* (*Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan*), p. 380 (tha 189a-b), translated by and quoted in D. Jackson, *Enlightenment by a Single Means*, p. 153 (Verlag 1994). (Wylie annotations and last sentence modified; Jackson translates *dkar po chig thub* as "Self-sufficient White [Remedy].") See footnote 15.

A. SŪTRA MAHĀMUDRĀ

Sūtra mahāmudrā is transmitted through an approach that is essentially sūtric, or connected with the Pāramitāyāna, but nevertheless accords with tantra. It is direct and effective like tantra, involving the use of some elements of the direct pointing out of the mind's nature, which come mainly from the essence mahāmudrā tradition, as well as the use of special instructions for meditation.

Sūtra mahāmudrā, as presented by Lord Gampopa, essentially consists of resting one's mind in the state of nonconceptual wisdom, free of mental activity. This is the fundamental definition of sūtra mahāmudrā: mind resting in the state in which it experiences the dharmadhātu (the expanse or nature of all things, which is beyond all elaboration). This resting is essentially "a nonconceptual wisdom beyond all elaboration" or "the unity of clarity and emptiness."

Lord Gampopa said: "The source of this mahāmudrā of ours is the *Uttaratantrashāstra*[8] of the Mahāyāna composed by Maitreya." Hence sūtra mahāmudrā is essentially derived from the *Uttaratantrashāstra*.

The actual method of mahāmudrā meditation is hidden in the sūtra teachings, and therefore this path of sūtra mahāmudrā is also known as the hidden or secret path of the sūtras (*mdo'i gsang lam*). It was revealed or first propagated by Lord Maitrīpa and passed down to Marpa and Milarepa, and then to Gampopa.

In India, the most famous cycle of teachings attributed to Maitrīpa is called the *Amanasikāroddesha*,[9] which means "the teachings [that emphasize] freedom from mental activities." This cycle was disseminated by Maitrīpa and by his renowned students, including Sahaja Vajra.

Jamgön Kongtrül the Great[10] explains that Lord Gampopa essentially created what is now called "sūtra mahāmudrā" by combining Maitrīpa's teachings, teachings from the *Uttaratantrashāstra*,

8. *Highest Continuum*, Tib. *rGyud bla ma*.
9. *Teachings on the Absence of Mental Fabrications*, Tib. *Yid la mi byed pa ston pa*.
10. Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye (1813–1899), first in the line of eminent Kongtrül incarnations and teacher of the fifteenth Gyalwang Karmapa, Khakhyab Dorje.

and the Kadampa teachings of Lord Atīsha. Sūtra mahāmudrā teaches ground mahāmudrā, path mahāmudrā, and fruition mahāmudrā. Through this path, one can attain complete buddhahood by traversing the five paths and ten bhūmis.

The origins of sūtra mahāmudrā trace back to the words of Lord Buddha Shākyamuni, mainly the *Samādhirājasūtra*,[11] and elements of mahāmudrā teachings are found in such sūtras as the *Sāgaramatiparipṛichchhā*,[12] *Maitreyaprasthāna*,[13] *Gaganagañjaparipṛichchhā*,[14] and many others.

B. MANTRA MAHĀMUDRĀ

Mantra mahāmudrā, or the mahāmudrā of tantra, is essentially transmitted through the Vajrayāna path of method (San. *upāyamārga*, Tib. *thabs lam*). It is the presentation of mahāmudrā found in the anuttarayoga tantras and in the instructions of those tantras. The anuttarayoga tantras are transmitted through four principal abhiṣhekas (empowerments). In this context, mahāmudrā is presented through the third abhiṣheka, the experience of four joys, which leads to the realizations of four levels of emptiness. The four-joys experience is called mahāsukha, great bliss. These four—joy (San. *ānanda*, Tib. *dga' ba*), supreme joy (San. *paramānanda*, Tib. *mchog dga'*), special joy (San. *viramānanda*, Tib. *khyad dga'*), and connate joy (San. *sahajānanda*, Tib. *lhan skyes kyi dga' ba*)—lead one to the means for realizing the ultimate state of mahāmudrā.

It is said in the teachings that to reach the true wisdom of the fourth abhiṣheka, one relies on the symbolic wisdom—the four levels of emptiness invoked by the four joys—while true wisdom is the mahāmudrā of the natural state. One essentially enters into this path by means of receiving the abhiṣhekas, especially the three superior abhiṣhekas, and working with the various stages of mahāmudrā practices of bliss-emptiness. So this particular approach

11. *King of Meditative Stabilization Sūtra*, Tib. *Ting nge 'dzin rgyal po'i mdo*.
12. *Questions of Sāgaramati*, Tib. *bLo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa'i mdo*.
13. *The Introduction for Maitreya*, Tib. *Byams pa 'jug pa*.
14. *Questions of Gaganagañja*, Tib. *Nam mkha' mdzod kyis zhus pa'i mdo*.

emphasizes mahāmudrā as the unity of bliss and emptiness—as the form of connate wisdom—as well as the particular application of the vajra body. The completion-stage practices of the Six Dharmas of Nāropa (*Nāro chos drug*) are also connected to this mahāmudrā path. In short, introducing mahāmudrā as the naked, natural state through the Vajrayāna way is called mantra mahāmudrā.

The origin of mantra mahāmudrā is found in the tantras, especially the anuttarayoga tantras taught by Lord Buddha. These include *Guhyasamāja* and other father tantras, *Mahāmāyā* and other mother tantras, *Kālachakra* of the nondual or neutral tantras, *Hevajra Tantra* of the essence, *Chakrasaṃvara Tantra* of the quintessence, *Vajrachatuṣhpīṭha Tantra*, and many others.

C. ESSENCE MAHĀMUDRĀ

Essence mahāmudrā is transmitted through a path more profound and more wondrous than the previous two because it leads to the sudden realization of the true nature of mind, which is called *thamal gyi shepa* (*tha mal gyi shes pa*), ordinary mind.

Essence mahāmudrā is practiced when an extremely realized guru bestows a transmission—a particular type of blessing (*adhiṣhṭhāna*) that is called "the empowerment of vajra wisdom"—upon an extremely receptive, open, devoted, and qualified student. Through the descent of the blessing of vajra wisdom, which is regarded as the descent of the actual realization of the root and lineage gurus, upon or into the student, the student fully recognizes *thamal gyi shepa* on the spot, which suddenly awakens in that student's heart. As a result, the student experiences what is called "simultaneous realization and liberation."

In this path there is no need for either the elaborate methods of tantra mahāmudrā or the gradual training of sūtra mahāmudrā. The transmission happens instantaneously. Thus, essence mahāmudrā is one's naked, ordinary mind resting in the unfabricated state.

This path of mahāmudrā is not essentially different from the other great path of practice known as the dzogchen (*rdzogs chen*) of the natural state, even though they use different terminologies and slightly different methods for leading students. Many great masters have taught that mahāmudrā and dzogchen are of an inseparable nature.

This essence mahāmudrā is the immaculate realization of all the great paṇḍitas (learned ones) and yogis (accomplished masters) of India, without exception. Even simply hearing the word "mahāmudrā" can lead to liberation from saṃsāric existence.

The origin of essence mahāmudrā is mainly found in the anuttarayoga tantras, as well as in the other sūtras and tantras mentioned earlier. Also, there are many upadesha (instruction) treatises and dohās by the mahāsiddhas of India and Tibet, which transmit the essence mahāmudrā.[15]

III. MAHĀMUDRĀ TREATISES IN INDIA AND TIBET

Mahāmudrā is transmitted through oral instructions from realized masters of the mahāmudrā lineages. Over the centuries, many of these instructions have been memorialized in profound treatises that both preserve and pass on the wisdom of mahāmudrā to succeeding generations. There are numerous mahāmudrā upadesha treatises, based on the sūtras and tantras of Lord Buddha, that

15. See Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye's clear, concise, and direct explanation of the three classifications of mahāmudrā in the fourth section of the eighth chapter of his *The Treasury of Knowledge*, volume 3, pp. 375–394 (Beijing edition). It is also noteworthy that Jackson, *supra* n. 7, finds in Gampopa's writings evidence of three Mahāmudrā "traditions," which he describes as "A Sūtra-Tradition [Mahāmudrā]," a "Mantrayāna Completion Stage [Mahāmudrā]," and a "[Mahāmudrā] Beyond Sūtra and Tantra." Ibid, pp. 14–28.

Jackson is primarily concerned with Gampopa's teachings insofar as they illuminate the 12th and 13th-century doctrinal debate over the "self-sufficient white [remedy]" (*dkar po chig thub*) teachings, and Jackson does not refer to Jamgön Kongtrül's commentary or specifically trace the lineage of the teachings. Nevertheless, he does identify in Gampopa's writings a basis for differentiating the three modes of explanation of the mahāmudrā transmission sketched in this introduction. Within Jackson's categorization scheme, *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* would fall in the category of "Beyond Sūtra and Tantra," or what is termed essence mahāmudrā.

have been translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan, as well as many written by Tibetan masters. The Mahāmudrā tradition is thus rich in texts compiling the oral instructions from both Indian and Tibetan masters. In Tibet, the instructions from great Indian mahāsiddhas are known as the *Chakchen Gyashung*[16] or *Treatises of Mahāmudrā from India*. These are translations of Sanskrit texts into Tibetan. Instructions from the great Tibetan yogis may also be found in numerous collections, such as the *Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*, and throughout the collected works and writings of Gampopa, of the Karmapas, and of other great masters of the lineage.

The mahāmudrā upadesha treatises are compilations of dohās, spontaneous instructional songs, which originally were memorized and then later written down and printed. The most well-known mahāmudrā upadesha texts from India are *Three Cycles of Dohās*[17] by the Great Brahman Saraha, *Seven Sections of Accomplishments*[18] and *Eight Treasures of Small Dohās*[19] by various mahāsiddhas, *Six*

16. Tib. *Phyag chen rgya gzhung.*

17. *Dohā Korsum* (Tib. *Do ha skor gsum*).

18. *Trupa Dedün* (Tib. *Grub pa sde bdun*). Künkhyen Pema Karpo (1527–1596), an eminent scholar and meditation master from the Drukpa Kagyü lineage, lists them in his *Explanation on the Mahāmudrā Upadesha: The Treasury of the Victorious Ones* (Tib. *Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag gi bshad sbyar rgyal ba'i gan mdzod*) as: (1) (San. title unavailable), *dPal gsang ba grub pa* (Tib.), by Padmavajra; (2) *Prajñopāyavinishchayasiddhi* (San.), *Thabs dang shes rab rnam par gtan la dbab pa'i grub pa* (Tib.), by Anaṅgavajra; (3) *Jñānasiddhināmasādhana* (San.), *Ye shes grub pa* (Tib.), by Indrabhūti; (4)*Advayasiddhisādhana* (San.), *gNyis su med par grub pa* (Tib.), by Lakṣhmīṅkarā; (5) *Vyaktabhāvānugatatattvasiddhi* (San.), *dNgos po gsal ba'i rjes su 'gro ba'i de kho na nyid grub pa* (Tib.), by Sahajayoginī Chito; (6) *Shrīoḍḍiyānavinirgataguhyamahāguhyatattvopadesha* (San.), *gSang ba'i gsang ba de kho na nyid kyi man ngag gam siddhi ta kas grub* (Tib.), by Dārika; (7) *Prajñopāyavinishchayasamudaya* (San.), *Thabs dang shes rab gtan la dbab pa'i don bsdus* (Tib.), by Āchārya Chamari.

Collections of Essence,[20] *Mahāmudropadesha*,[21] also known as the *Ganges Mahāmudrā*,[22] by Tilopa, *Dṛiṣhṭisaṃkṣhipta*[23] by Nāropa, *Condensed Mahāmudrā*[24] and *Amanasikāroddesha* by Maitrīpa, and many other treatises.

There are also many mahāmudrā upadesha treatises from Tibetan masters, especially from the forefathers of this lineage: Marpa, Milarepa, Rechungpa, Gampopa, the Karmapas, Pakmo Drupa and others. The Karma Kagyü lineage is well-known for its many profound mahāmudrā instructions. Examples are those from the first Karmapa, Düsum Khyenpa (1110–1193), who was a close disciple and lineage holder of Lord Gampopa; from the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje (1284–1339), who wrote *Mahāmudrā: Pointing Out the Three Kāyas*;[25] and the instructions from the eighth Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje (1507–1554), who wrote a four-volume text on that subject and composed commentaries on many of the Indian mahāsiddhas' dohās.

In the sixteenth century, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (1512–1587)

18. (continued from previous page) George Roerich in his translation *The Blue Annals* (Tib. *Deb ther sngon po*, Motilal Banarsidass 1988) suggests a slightly different set of seven texts (p. 534), in which (1) would be *Sakalatantrasambhavasañchodanīshrīguyhasiddhi* (San.), *rGyud ma lus pa'i don nges par skul bar byed pa* (Tib.), by Padmavajra, and (7) would be *Shrīsahajasiddhi* (San.), *dPal lhan cig skyes pa grub pa* (Tib.), by Ḍombī Heruka.
19. *Dochung Dzögye* (Tib. *Do chung mdzod brgyad*).
20. *Nyingpo Kortruk* (Tib. *sNying po skor drug*). Künkhyen Pema Karpo identifies them as: (1) *Dohākoṣha* (San.), *Do ha mdzod* (Tib.), by Saraha; (2) *Shikharadohā* or *Kharadohā* (San.), *rTse mo do ha* (Tib.), by Saraha; (3) *Svādhiṣhṭhāna* (San.), *bDag byin rlab* (Tib.), by Āryadeva; (4) *Chaturmudrā* (San.), *Phyag rgya bzhi pa* (Tib.), by Nāgārjunagarbha; (5) *Chittāvaraṇavishodhana* (San.), *Sems kyi sgrib sbyong* (Tib.), by Āryadeva; and (6) *Achintya* (San.), *bSam mi khyab* (Tib.), by Kuddālīpada. (Identification of the authors and Sanskrit titles is tentative.)
21. Tib. *Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag.*
22. Tib. *Phyag chen gang ga ma.*
23. *Summary of the View*, Tib. *lTa ba mdor bsdus.*

wrote *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā*. Later in that century, the great Drukpa Kagyü master, Künkhyen Pema Karpo, wrote *The Explanation on the Mahāmudrā Upadesha: The Treasury of the Victorious Ones*. Both of these texts are regarded as among the most detailed and complete explanations of the gradual path of mahāmudrā. Another extraordinary text of the Drukpa Kagyü lineage is the *Eight Major and Minor Instructions*[26] by Tsangpa Gyare.[27] Also exceptional are the mahāmudrā instructions of Pakmo Drupa,[28] known as "The Five Aspects of Mahāmudrā Practice."[29] Indeed, all the Kagyü lineages have produced mahāmudrā treatises that comprise a treasure trove of oral mahāmudrā instructions. Because of the living quality of these instructions, they provide an infinite source of mahāmudrā transmission.

Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning, also written in the sixteenth century, is one of three instruction texts on mahāmudrā composed by the ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje. Taken together, they comprise the most complete set of instructions on mahāmudrā ever compiled and are well-known for the unique practice-lineage oral-instruction style in which they are written. These three texts have become some of the most important mahāmudrā practice guides for the Kagyü and continue to be used to this day by masters and students of the lineage. *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* is a brilliant example of the mahāmudrā instructions available from the Karmapas and their students in the Kagyü lineage.

IV. The Heart Teachings of the Kagyü Lineage

Mahāmudrā is the heart of the teachings of the Kagyü lineage,

24. *Chakchen Tsikdü* (Tib. *Phyag chen tshig bsdus*).
25. *sKu gsum ngo sprod.*
26. *Khrid chen brgyad dang khrid chung brgyad.*
27. An early master in the Drukpa Kagyü lineage, Tsangpa Gyare (1161–1211) founded the Druk Monastery, after which Drukpa Kagyü got its name.
28. One of the three main disciples of Gampopa, Pakmo Drupa (1110–1170) founded the monastery of Densa Thil in southern Tibet.
29. *Phyag rgya chen po lnga ldan.*

which emphasizes the continuity of oral instructions passed on from master to student. This emphasis is reflected in the literal meaning of "Kagyü." The first syllable, *ka* (Tib. *bka'*), which means "speech," refers to the scriptures of the Buddha and the oral instructions of the guru. *Ka* has the sense both of the enlightened meaning conveyed by the words of the teacher as well as the force conveyed by such words of insight. The second syllable, *gyü* (Tib. *brgyud*), means lineage or tradition. Together, these syllables mean "the lineage of the oral instructions."

A. THE KAGYÜ LINEAGE OF MAHĀMUDRĀ

Historically, Prince Siddhārtha attained enlightenment under the bodhi tree in Bodhgayā over 2,500 years ago and then manifested as the Buddha. According to Buddhist cosmology, he was the fourth historic buddha of this fortunate aeon. Prince Siddhārtha's achievement of enlightenment, the realization itself, is called the dharmakāya, the body of truth. When that realization is expressed through subtle symbols, it is called the sambhogakāya, the body of enjoyment. The historical manifestation of such realization in a form more accessible to sentient beings, the physical form of Shākyamuni Buddha, is called the nirmāṇakāya, the body of manifestation.

The Mahāmudrā lineage traces its origin back to the historic Buddha, Shākyamuni, through Marpa Chökyi Lodrö, the great translator and realized yogi, who brought the unbroken lineage of Buddha's Mahāmudrā from India to Tibet.

Marpa first trained as a translator under Drogmi Shākya Yeshe at age fifteen, and later traveled three times to India and four times to Nepal in search of Buddhist teachings. He is said to have studied with a hundred and eight masters and yogis, but his principal teachers were Nāropa and Maitrīpa.

Marpa brought two lineages to Tibet, the practice lineage and the teaching lineage, and passed them on to his disciples. His primary disciple and lineage holder was Milarepa (1040–1123), the most renowned and accomplished of Tibet's tantric yogis, who achieved enlightenment in one lifetime. Milarepa held the lineage and tradition of the practice lineage. Some of the other great students of Marpa were Ngog Chöku Dorje, Tsurtön Wang-nge, and Metön Chenpo, who held Marpa's tradition of the teaching lineage. This is how the two great systems of the practice lineage and the teaching lineage took root in the Kagyü lineage.

The great master Gampopa (1079–1153), or Dakpo Lhaje, and Rechungpa (1084–1161) were the principal students of Milarepa. Gampopa was prophesied in the sūtras by Buddha and established the framework of the lineage by unifying Milarepa's Mahāmudrā lineage with the stages-of-the-path tradition of the Kadampa lineage. This unique tradition, known as the Dakpo Kagyü, became of critical importance to the unfolding of the Kagyü lineage.

B. THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT MAHĀMUDRĀ TRANSMISSION LINEAGES

In general, there are two main lineages of mahāmudrā, known as the direct and the indirect lineages. These are lines of transmission that trace back to their original source. Marpa received from Nāropa the lineage of tantric teachings called the "four special transmissions" (*bka' babs bzhi*): (1) illusory-body yoga and the yoga of the transference of consciousness, (2) dream yoga, (3) luminosity yoga, and (4) inner-heat yoga. Nāropa had obtained these teachings directly from Tilopa (988–1069), who in turn had received them from two special lines of transmission, the direct and indirect lineages.

1. THE DIRECT LINEAGE

The original source of the teachings for the special transmission of the direct lineage is Buddha Vajradhara, the primordial or dharmakāya buddha. Vajradhara expresses the quintessence of buddhahood itself, the essence of the historical Buddha's realization of enlightenment. The dharmakāya nature of Vajradhara is visually depicted in paintings by his dark blue color, like the sky.

Vajradhara is central to the Kagyü lineage because Tilopa received the Vajrayāna teachings directly from Vajradhara, who is synonymous with the dharmakāya, the source of all manifestations of enlightenment. Thus, the Kagyü lineage originated from the very nature of buddhahood.

2. The Indirect Lineage

The indirect lineages that Tilopa inherited are composed of four main streams of transmitted wisdom called the four special transmission lineages. They were condensed into one and transmitted by Tilopa. There are slightly different ways of looking at the details of the four special transmission lineages. The presentation here is based on two main sources: Jamgön Kongtrül the Great and the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje.[30]

According to Jamgön Kongtrül the Great,[31] the four special transmission lineages are: (1) the inner-heat (San. *chaṇḍālī*, Tib. *gtum mo*) yoga lineage from Charyāpāda; (2) the illusory-body (San. *māyākāya*, Tib. *sgyu lus*) and the luminosity (San. *prabhāsvara*, Tib. *'od gsal*) yoga lineage from Nāgārjuna; (3) the dream (San. *svapna*, Tib. *rmi lam*) yoga lineage from Lvabapa (Kambala); and (4) the bardo (San. *antarābhava*, Tib. *bar do*) and the ejection of consciousness (San. *saṃkrānti*, Tib. *'pho ba*) yoga lineage from Sukhasiddhī. Tilopa also inherited other transmission lineages, such as the practice of the prajñā consort (Tib. *shes rab ma*) from Indrabhūti and the transference of consciousness (Tib. *'pho ba grong 'jug*) from Mātaṅgī.

The four special transmission lineages according to the view of the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje,[32] are as follows: (1) Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Chandrakīrti, and Mātaṅgī as the southern special transmission;[33] (2) Ḍombīpa, Vīnapa, Lvabapa (Kambala), and Indrabhūti as the western lineage;[34] (3) Lūyipa, Ḍeṅgipa, Dārika, and Sukhadhari as the northern lineage;[35] (4) Sukhamahāsiddhi, Thanglopa, Shinglopa,[36] and Karṇaripa as the eastern lineage.[37] Jamgön Kongtrül explains that these four directions refer to the places from which these teachers came or where they manifested their activity.

Künkhyen Pema Karpo traces back the indirect lineage to Rāhula, the son of the Buddha. He explains the details of the lineage as follows: Buddha to Rāhula, Saraha, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, and then to Tachok Dzin.[38] From Tachok Dzin, the lineage forks into two: (a) one branch goes through Indrabhūti (middle) and Princess Lakṣhmīṅkarā, and (b) the other through Līlāvajra and Guḍhira. The lineages then rejoin into one stream, as Padmavajra receives the lineage from both Princess Lakṣhmīṅkarā and Guḍhira. Padmavajra transmits the lineage to Dütsi Ga-we, from whence it flows to Jung-ne, Chökyipa, Zangpopa, and then to Toktsepa.[39] Again, the lineage forks into two streams: (a) the first

30. In footnotes 30–32 and 34, the third Karmapa's view is compared with the presentation of Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa (1504–1566), second in the line of eminent Pawo incarnations and the "moonlike heart son" of the eighth Gyalwang Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje.

31. *Treasury of Knowledge* (*Shes bya mdzod*) by Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye, vol. 1, p. 526 (Beijing 1982).

32. As quoted in *Treasury of Knowledge*, vol. 1, pp. 526–7.

33. According to Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa's *The Religious History: Banquet for Scholars* (*Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*) pp. 740–744 (Beijing 1985), these are the eastern special transmission lineage of father tantra mainly emphasizing the practice of prāṇayāma practice. Pawo also adds Saraha in the beginning of this lineage, as the teacher of Nāgārjuna.

34. Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa agrees with the third Karmapa's identification of these figures as the western special transmission lineage of dream yoga and bardo; however, Pawo spells Vīnapa as Vinasa. Ibid., pp. 740 and 746–751.

35. Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa identifies these teachers as the southern special transmission lineage of prajñā consort practice. Ibid., pp. 740 and 744–6.

36. Thanglopa and Shinglopa are the Tibetan names for these Indian masters; the Sanskrit of their names is undetermined.

37. According to Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa, these masters are the northern special transmission lineage of the ejection of consciousness yoga and the transference of consciousness, as well as the inner-heat lineage. He also lists the teachers slightly differently as: Sumati (or Ḍākinī Kalpa Zangmo), Thanglopa, Shinglopa, Karṣharipa, Jālandharipa, and Chāryāpa. Ibid., pp. 740 and 751–4.

38. Tachok Dzin is the Tibetan name for this Indian master; the Sanskrit of his name is undetermined.

39. Dütsi Ga-we, Jung-ne, Chökyipa, Zangpopa, and Toktsepa are the Tibetan names for these Indian masters; the Sanskrit of their names is undetermined.

through Lvabapa (Kambala), Tilopa, and Nāropa, and (b) the second through Shavari and Maitrīpa. Marpa, the student of both Nāropa and Maitrīpa, recombines the lineage into one stream again and passes it to Milarepa, who in turn passes it to Gampopa.

V. Schools of the Kagyü Lineage

Gampopa had three heart disciples: Düsum Khyenpa, Pakmo Drupa, and Saltong Shogom. Düsum Khyenpa, or Khampa U-se (literally, the "white-haired Khampa"), became known as the first Karmapa, who established the Karma Kagyü lineage.

From Gampopa's Dakpo Kagyü, four main lineages developed: (1) Barom Kagyü, (2) Tshalpa Kagyü, (3) Kaṃtsang or Karma Kagyü, and (4) Pakdru Kagyü.

From Pakmo Drupa developed eight additional Kagyü Schools: (1) Drikung Kagyü; (2) Taklung Kagyü; (3) Drukpa Kagyü; (4) Yasang Kagyü; (5) Trophu Kagyü; (6) Shuksep Kagyü; (7) Yelpa Kagyü; and (8) Martsang Kagyü.

Among these lineages, the most widely known is the Karma Kagyü lineage, which has been continued over the centuries through the impeccable activity of the Gyalwang Karmapas.

VI. Two Kagyü Approaches to the Path

According to the Kagyü lineage in general, the path of enlightenment consists of two basic approaches: approaching meditation within the view and approaching the view within meditation. Approaching meditation within the view, one engages in hearing and contemplating to resolve the view. When one gains certainty in the view, one then meditates within that. Through the second method, approaching the view within meditation, one does not engage in many analyses of hearing and contemplating, but through clarifying the mind in meditation, the view is naturally realized. This is described clearly by Jamgön Kongtrül the Great, who writes in his *Torch of Definitive Meaning*[40] that the Kagyü lineage emphasizes the second approach and is known for its accessibility to students of all levels and faculties, allowing everyone to practice meditation and attain realization.

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40. Tib. *Nges don sgron me*.

VII. The Life of the Ninth Gyalwang Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje

Through the centuries, the Gyalwang Karmapas have played a central role in the transmission of the mahāmudrā teachings of the Kagyü lineage. The author of *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* was the ninth in the line of Karmapas, born in 1556. His birth had been predicted by the eighth Gyalwang Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje, who, at the age of twenty-eight, during a stay in Kongpo, wrote:

> In the life following this one,
> I will be born near the glorious, self-arisen Avalokiteshvara
> In the upper regions of the snowy range of Tre-shö to the east,
> A place where there is the sound of water and the dharma is heard.
> I have seen the signs that
> I will be born not far from that place.

In accordance with the prediction, in Eastern Tibet in Trewo-me (*Tre bo smad*), Ador and Lingsa Ahlö gave birth to a child in the Fire Dragon year (on the seventh day of the seventh month in the ninth rabjung, or cycle, of the Tibetan calendar, or 1556–67). His mother named him Namkha Gyalpo (King of Space).

Before his birth, people witnessed many unusual signs such as hearing the sound of mantra recitations all around the family house, seeing many rainbows appear in the village, and the like. His father, Ador, dreamt of patting a blue lion cub sitting in his lap, and his mother, Lingsa Ahlö, also had many dreams, such as one of holding a big golden maṇḍala in her lap.

Soon after his birth, the baby sat cross-legged and proclaimed: "I am the Karmapa," and recited mantras. He began walking within several weeks.

The boy was first recognized as the Karmapa by the fourth Situ, Chökyi Gocha, who was located relatively close by, and a year later by the fifth Shamar, Könchok Yenlak, who enthroned him at the age of six.

Goshir Chökyong Tashi, a student of the eighth Karmapa, was the first to have visited the child. He was firmly convinced that the child was the Karmapa. The Tai Situpa soon thereafter offered the

child a long-life empowerment. The Shamarpa subsequently sent his representative to make offerings, which included personal belongings of the previous Karmapa. When the Karmapa was asked at that time if he had any message for Shamarpa, he said to tell Shamarpa: "Do you not respect and love me? Come to see me soon."

In the year of the Rooster, Shamarpa and an entourage came to the Karmapa and offered all the precious treasures of the Karmapa lineage. With full protocol and respect, Shamarpa received and enthroned the ninth Karmapa at the great encampment called Garchen (the Great Tent), performed the haircutting ceremony, and gave him the upāsaka and bodhisattva vows. The Karmapa received the name Palden Mipham Chökyi Wangchuk.

At the age of ten, the Karmapa went to Tsurphu Monastery, the seat of the Karmapas. At the age of eleven, he received from Shamarpa and Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa the novice ordination and the name Palden Mipham Chökyi Wangchuk Dorje Chok-le Nampar Gyal-we Nyingpo Khyabdak Nyima. At twenty-four, he took the full monastic ordination, that of bhikṣhu, from Shamarpa and Gyaltsab Drakpa Paljor.

The Karmapa received the empowerments, key instructions, intellectual training, and transmissions of the sūtras, tantras, and the teachings of Mikyö Dorje and other Kagyü gurus from Shamar Könchok Yenlak.

From Situ Rinpoche he received the lineage transmission of Mahāmudrā and the Six Yogas of Nāropa. He also received many other teachings and lineage transmissions from Situ Rinpoche, Pawo Rinpoche, Gyaltsap Rinpoche, and others.

Among his many activities, the ninth Karmapa started the building of the Göku Chenmo (*Gos sku chen mo*, Great Hanging Brocade Image) at Tsurphu Monastery. The image was completed later. He also undertook a long retreat at Tsurphu and other places—near sacred lakes, in mountain caves, and in forests.

He spent most of his life studying, practicing, and teaching in a traveling monastic camp. This was known as Karme Garchen (the Great Tent of the Karmapa Entourage) and included all the facilities for monastic study and training in practice. In this way, his teaching activities spread throughout Tibet, and the activities of a monastery were preserved. The ninth Karmapa emphasized meditation practice during this traveling monastic camp.

The Karmapa and the entourage visited many sacred places, including Southern Tibet, Tsari, Tsang, Mongolia, and Bhutan, and benefited many sentient beings. He received invitations from the Emperor of China, but was unable to go there. He also received an invitation from the King of Sikkim. Unable to go there himself, the ninth Karmapa sent a senior representative who established monasteries throughout Sikkim. One of the monasteries established under the Karmapa's auspices was Rumtek Monastery, which is the present seat of the Karmapas in India. The Karmapa blessed and consecrated these monasteries from Tibet.

The Karmapa subsequently led the Mönlam (Great Prayer) and gave ordinations at Sung-rab Ling, along with a great gathering of the monastic saṅgha. At that time, he made some predictions about his reincarnation to some of his students.

Wangchuk Dorje taught widely throughout Tibet and other places. Notably, he gave many teachings and empowerments to Tāranatha. He restored monasteries, institutes, retreats, and temples wherever he went. Among his innumerable students and followers, some of the main lineage holders were the sixth Shamar, Garwang Chökyi Wangchuk; the fifth Situ, Chökyi Gyaltsen; the third Pawo, Tsuklak Gyatso; the second Treho, Lapsum Gyatso; Jonang Tāranatha; Drikung Rinchen Namgyal; Dakpo Tashi Namgyal; Lowo Tülku; and many others.

The ninth Gyalwang Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, entered parinirvāṇa at the age of forty-eight, in the Water Hare year (on the twenty-eighth day of the first month in the tenth rabjung), or 1603 in the Western calendar system.

VIII. THE MAHĀMUDRĀ TREATISES OF THE NINTH KARMAPA

The ninth Karmapa composed over ten major treatises on philosophy and practice, including philosophical commentaries based on the works of the eighth Gyalwang Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje, such as on the *Madhyamakāvatāra*[41] and the *Abhidharmakosha*.[42]

Amongst all these texts, the ninth Karmapa is most renowned

41. *Entrance to the Middle Way*, Tib. *dbU ma la 'jug pa*.
42. *Treasury of Abhidharma*, Tib. *Chos mngon pa'i mdzod*.

for his three instruction books on mahāmudrā meditation:

1. *Mahāmudrā: Pointing Out the Dharmakāya* (*Chos sku mdzub tshugs*)

2. *Mahāmudrā: Illuminating the Darkness of Ignorance* (*Ma rig mun sel*)

3. *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* (*Nges don rgya mtsho*)

Illuminating the Darkness of Ignorance is a condensed version of the *Ocean of Definitive Meaning*. *Pointing Out the Dharmakāya* is a summary of *Illuminating the Darkness of Ignorance* and is the shortest. These three texts have had a major, continuing impact on the teaching of mahāmudrā.

The Ocean of Definitive Meaning, the most extensive in length of the Karmapa's three texts on mahāmudrā, is exceptional for providing not only the general view and practices of mahāmudrā, but also the rich methods of the oral instructions for realizing the nature of one's mind, enlightenment. By writing this profound text, the ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, preserved and passed on many of the oral instructions of the Mahāmudrā lineage, a living tradition that continues to this day.

MAHĀMUDRĀ: THE OCEAN OF DEFINITIVE MEANING

The Ocean of Definitive Meaning is an extensive and detailed presentation of a great number of instructions on mahāmudrā. The following brief overview presents some of the central points of the ninth Karmapa's profound treatise and puts them within the context of the living Kagyü lineage tradition, the tradition in which the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa wrote during the sixteenth century, and which has vibrantly continued up to the present day, four hundred years later.

After an introduction, *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* is divided into three main parts: (I) The Preliminaries, (II) The Actual Practice, and (III) The Concluding Topics. The treatise concludes with an additional section, (IV) The Supplementary Topics.[43]

THE INTRODUCTION

After the traditional homage and pledge to complete the composition, Wangchuk Dorje remarks on the qualities of students and different types of masters who can transmit the lineage. The main point of the Mahāmudrā tradition is that one can achieve enlightenment in one lifetime through this path and its practices. In other words, the mahāmudrā view can actually be recognized experientially, and this experience can be stabilized through various practices on the path.

In one of his remarks to students, the Karmapa makes it emphatically clear that personal experience and realization are the most important requisites for this path of mahāmudrā:

> For those of you who have already received instructions, your previous general knowledge or mere dry intellectual understanding is not sufficient: each guru has his or her own dharma tradition. For those who are spiritual mentors of the Mantra or Characteristic [Vehicles], just referring to the words of the texts and treatises is not sufficient: in this [practice], you must have certainty in the recognition that comes from experience.

The numerous methods of instruction in the Kagyü tradition can be summarized by the two approaches used by Gampopa to guide students: (1) for qualified students, the path of method (*thabs lam*) that was transmitted by Milarepa; (2) for the majority of students, the gradual path (*lam rim*) that was transmitted by the Kadampa tradition. The Karmapa then sets out some guidelines that teachers should follow in transmitting these practice instructions.

Gurus should avoid: (1) "the crowd-pleasing instructions of charlatans," which have no relation to the meaning; (2) "the ostentatious instructions of the ambitious," which are egotistical interpretations with no basis in the scriptures or reasoning, given by those who have failed to personalize the meaning of the words; (3) "the textual instructions of those with little intelligence," which are mere superficial instructions on the words, put forth

43. Section numbering in this summary corresponds to the numbering in the text.

without having developed one's own certainty; and (4) "the superficial instructions of those of high rank," which involve the fault of being prolix.[44]

Instead, their instructions should accord with (1) "the word-instructions of paṇḍitas," who know all the words by heart and have ascertained the meaning; (2) "the direct instructions of great meditators," who have achieved certain meditative experience; (3) "the experiential instructions of yogins or yoginīs," who have achieved some experience or realization; (4) "the mind instructions of realized beings," who know directly the different levels and capacities of disciples and give instructions in accordance with those capabilities; and (5) the "pointing-out instructions for old women," which directly point out one's own experience and realization to others.[45]

PART I: THE PRELIMINARIES

The mahāmudrā practice is a complete journey to enlightenment, from beginning to end. It begins with the preliminary practices, a common feature of many Buddhist practices. In *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, the preliminary practices are divided into three stages, through which one becomes a perfect candidate for the actual practices of mahāmudrā. Traditionally, these preliminary practices are held to be very important, as expressed in a traditional aphorism of the lineage: "The preliminary practice is more profound than the actual practice." The ninth Karmapa explains:

> The preliminary practices are classified as being either a longer and indirect [preliminary] or a shorter and direct [preliminary]. Atīsha explained that the former is the path for beings of lesser and intermediate [abilities] and that the latter is the path for great beings. In accordance with that, the exalted Dakpo Rinpoche taught four dharmas, each of which must precede [the subsequent ones].[46]

44. p. 5.
45. p. 5
46. p. 5.

And further:

> To practice such instructions, you must not be carried away by laziness and distractions. The mind is gullible and external objects are dazzling and seductive, and so there is the danger that you will be overwhelmed by them. To prevent that, it is necessary to present the following in sequence. . . .[47]

The preliminary practices are (A) The Four Common Preliminaries, (B) The Four Uncommon Preliminaries, and (C) The Four Special Preliminaries.

A. THE FOUR COMMON PRELIMINARIES

These are contemplating or reflecting on the precious human existence, death and impermanence, karmic causes and results, and the faults of saṃsāra.

The first common preliminary, or reminder, is the preciousness of this very rare human birth. Because a human birth is so rare and precious, we should make use of every opportunity to turn our minds towards the practice of the dharma. We must also remember that this precious human life is impermanent, which is the second reminder. It can be easily taken away by death. The natural law of karma is the third reminder, which teaches us to practice dharma more effectively in our everyday life. The final reminder is of the shortcomings of saṃsāra. It reminds us that the world we live in is filled with all kinds of suffering and fear.

B. THE FOUR UNCOMMON PRELIMINARIES

These are taking refuge and generating bodhichitta, Vajrasattva mantra practice, maṇḍala offering, and guru-yoga practice.

The first of the four uncommon preliminaries is taking refuge and generating bodhichitta. Taking refuge is actually entering into the path of buddhadharma in general and Vajrayāna in particular. Taking refuge and generating bodhichitta means entering into the actual path of mahāmudrā. In general, there is the threefold refuge of the buddha, dharma and saṅgha. In the Vajrayāna, there is a

47. p. 5–6.

sixfold refuge. We begin by taking refuge in our guru, since the Vajrayāna path does not exist without the guru principle. We also take refuge in the yidams and in the protectors.

In order to have a smooth path and achieve realization, we have to purify our negativities and obscurations, obstacles to the path. The second uncommon preliminary is therefore the profound purification practice of Vajrasattva, one of many hundreds of methods used in the Vajrayāna for overcoming negativities.

The third uncommon preliminary practice is the maṇḍala offering. Our habitual connection with relative reality can enmesh us in conceptual mind and conceptual reference points, blocking us from achieving the complete state of mahāmudrā realization, or buddhahood, which is the accomplishment of enlightenment for the benefit of limitless beings of different capacities and different levels. Only through the accumulation of merit are we able to benefit other beings in this way. In the Vajrayāna path, the method for accumulating merit is the maṇḍala offering.

The most important key to our realization is found through the blessings of our guru, our teachers, our lineage forefathers, and the primordial wisdom itself. This transmission is not possible without opening ourselves fully to our lineage gurus. This opening to the lineage blessings and transmissions is catalyzed by the practice of guru yoga, the fourth uncommon preliminary practice.

C. THE FOUR SPECIAL PRELIMINARIES

These are the causal condition, the empowering condition, the object condition, and the proximate condition.

The causal condition is the development of a genuine sense of revulsion. As Wangchuk Dorje says, "The cause [for mahāmudrā practice] is to be free from taking things to be real and to be without any attachments: to develop revulsion [for saṃsāra] and give up all activities."[48] This revulsion is actually the mind freed from the temporal and immediate concerns of worldly things. Such a mind becomes the foundation of meditation. The development of this inner condition then helps us turn our minds toward the path of dharma, the path of meditation. It is the actual force that turns our minds toward dharma, in this case, mahāmudrā and the path.

48. p. 83.

The empowering condition refers to our connection to the guru, a genuine spiritual friend and a genuine teacher. The ninth Karmapa further divides this condition into four different categories of guru: lineage guru, scriptural guru, symbolic guru, and ultimate guru.

The most important is the lineage guru. The lineage guru is the one who possesses the genuine, unbroken lineage of the transmission of mahāmudrā. The lineage guru has two major qualities. The first quality is that he or she has the genuine transmission of the lineage. The second is that he or she has the energy and realization to transmit that lineage to another being, the right vessel.

The student must establish the right connection to the guru. It is said in the tradition of the practice lineage that the pattern of our path is determined by the pattern of our relationship with the guru. And so our connection with the guru, our relationship with the guru, is somehow the model for our spiritual journey, like a model building for a future palace. The empowering condition makes a straightforward psychological point. It is a very simple fact that you derive the most benefit from taking medicine with full confidence and trust. If you take the medicine with the attitude that it may or may not be effective, then you get that kind of benefit. Therefore, the empowering condition becomes the key point of the mahāmudrā path; it is where we try to develop devotion, trust, and confidence in the lineage and the teacher.

The lineage guru is a human teacher through whom we can receive the transmission and guidance on the path of our spiritual journey. After developing a certain relationship with that guru and gaining a certain realization and strength on the path, the other aspects of the guru begin to manifest. This is summarized in more detail by Bokar Rinpoche.[49] Briefly: When "all the Buddha's teachings manifest as instructions," this is "the guru who appears as the words of the Sugata." When "there is nothing that is not a guru," this is "the guru who manifests as symbolic appearances." When "you realize the suchness of all phenomena," this is "the guru who is the ultimate dharmatā."

The object condition refers to the various objects of mahāmudrā meditation. All the various objects of meditation on the

49. Appendix II, p. 310.

path are this third condition, the objective condition. We begin with the ground mahāmudrā as the basic object of our meditation. This ground is the inseparability of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the inseparability of the three kāyas existing in this very nature of mind, in this very nature of reality. Developing the right understanding of the ground mahāmudrā thus becomes of great importance, for without it we cannot develop any sense of the right object of meditation.

The fourth condition is the proximate condition. This is instantaneously entering into the mahāmudrā of meditation. Simply put, it is going beyond labeling thought, beyond discursive thought: "Simply sustain the uncontrived ordinary mind."[50] We go beyond meditation, meditator, and the act of meditation.

PART II: THE ACTUAL PRACTICE

The great yogi Milarepa said, "'Meditating' is not meditating on something, but familiarizing [yourself with your mind]." For the tradition within which the ninth Karmapa composed *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, meditation means acquainting mind with its nature, which is the natural state of all phenomena. It is simply sustaining the naturalness of our minds without any conceptualizations.

The Karmapa's discussion of the actual practice focuses on the meditation practices of shamatha and vipashyanā. In general, these two practices are common to all three yānas. Mahāmudrā shamatha and vipashyanā are the two key practices in the Mahāmudrā tradition in general, and the sūtra and essence mahāmudrā lineages specifically. In this mahāmudrā treatise, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa provides incomparably detailed instructions on mahāmudrā shamatha and vipashyanā.

A. MAHĀMUDRĀ SHAMATHA

1. THE GENERAL EXPLANATION

Meditation is working with your mind in the most direct way. In saying that "meditating" simply means "familiarizing," we mean familiarizing ourselves with our minds, with our thoughts, and with

50. p. 88.

our emotions. Without guidance, such as provided by *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, it is difficult to understand this simplicity. Through meditation, we develop and experience inner peace of mind and panoramic awareness in our everyday life.

The ninth Karmapa presents in this text a wealth of techniques to guide meditation. Traditionally, methods of meditation are presented in written instructions, and explained and conveyed experientially through the oral instructions of a teacher. The details of such instructions vary from tradition to tradition. How the practices are specifically talked about, how they are orally communicated, is a matter of lineage.

Meditation begins with three basic steps: physical posture, basic technique, and further instruction.

a) THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE BODY

The Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje begins his explanation of the actual practice of shamatha with the posture of the body. The correct physical posture is important for bringing the mind to rest and experiencing its nature. The bodily posture is the support and the mind is that which is supported. It is said to be like when the house (the support) is locked, the person (who is supported by the house) cannot go out.

The essential points for the physical body can be achieved through two different postures, which are explained in detail in *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*: the seven-point posture of Vairochana and the five-point posture of meditative concentration. The seven points of posture of Vairochana are:

1. Sit cross-legged.

2. Place your hands in the position of meditative equipoise, resting them four finger-widths below your navel, and straighten [your arms], so that the elbows do not bend.

3. Raise your shoulders, so that they resemble the wings of a vulture.

4. Bend your neck, pressing down on your Adam's apple with your chin, so that it resembles an iron hook.

5. Straighten your spine, so that it resembles an arrow.

6. Direct your gaze into space four finger-widths from the tip of your nose, without blinking or allowing [your eyes] to wander about.

7. Almost close your lips, leaving a slight space between your teeth, and rest your tongue on your palate.[51]

The five points of meditative concentration are:

1. "To be straight like an arrow" means that your spine should be straight.

2. "To be bent like an iron hook" means that your neck should be bent just slightly, in a natural way.

3. "To be crossed like lattice work" means that your ankles should be crossed.

4. "To be bound like an iron chain" means that your knees should be held tightly with a vajra knot or meditation belt.

5. "To be tightened as [represented by the syllables] *ḷi* and *ṛi*" means that your lower door should be closed forcefully by placing a cushion under your buttocks.[52]

These five essential points concerning the body are very profound. Wangchuk Dorje quotes Marpa the great translator, who taught this posture:

> My five essential points for the body are an even greater instruction than all the instructions in Tibet put together.[53]

You should carefully arrange the meditation cushion, since it is important that the meditation seat be comfortable.

b) THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE MIND

In brief, the essential points for the mind are taught as follows:

> Do not reflect. Do not think. Do not speculate.

51. pp. 93–94.
52. pp. 98–99.
53. The full quotation is on page 99.

> Do not meditate. Do not analyze. Rest the mind
> in its own place.[54]

Genuine resting of mahāmudrā shamatha is sustaining the state of ordinary mind. This cannot be achieved through great desire or wanting to "rest," or through holding the mind too tight, or through great effort. At the beginning, it is sufficient merely to have the thought of simply wanting to sit and meditate. No further conceptual effort is necessary. Therefore, you should let go of all thoughts, including any thoughts of meditation or wanting to meditate—just relax and rest naturally and one-pointedly in the open, spacious, and unaltered state of ordinary mind, which is empty, luminous, and beyond grasping, and within which there is nothing to accept or reject.

Tilopa advised:

> Put aside all physical activities: rest leisurely in the natural state.
> Do not express anything verbally: sounds are empty, like echoes.
> Do not mentally contemplate anything: behold the ultimate (*la zla'i chos*).
> The body has no essence: it is like a bamboo stalk.
> Mind is like the center of space: it transcends being an object for thought.
> Without adding to or removing [anything] from that state, rest at ease.[55]

As it is said:

> When the mind is not altered, it is clear.
> When water is not disturbed, it is transparent.[56]

The Great Brahman Saraha said:

> If the mind-itself that is twisted into knots
> Is loosened, it is undoubtedly liberated.[57]

54. p. 106–107.
55. p. 110.
56. p. 115.

He also said:

> Leave the uncontrived mind in freshness. The contrived mind will not achieve the paths of noble beings.[58]

In brief, there are three points when resting in meditation: settling naturally, resting without alteration or fabrication, and remaining relaxed.

2. THE DETAILED PRESENTATION

The ninth Gyalwang Karmapa elaborates further, giving detailed instructions on the essential points concerning the mind.

a) SETTLING THE MIND THAT HAS NOT SETTLED

Those with sharp mental capacities can be liberated simultaneous with their recognition of the nature of mind and, therefore, may not need to be guided through the gradual path of shamatha and vipashyanā. However, middling and ordinary types of beings must be guided gradually. They begin with the training in the following stages of shamatha practices.

i) CONCENTRATING USING AN OBJECT

While maintaining the essential points of the proper physical posture, you concentrate on external objects, either large or small. Without distraction, one-pointedly hold your gaze on the object, which may be either external or internal.

(a) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING EXTERNAL

First, you can meditate on impure objects. Large objects can be as large as a mountain or an ocean, or they can be a coffee mug or the like. You can hold your gaze on large forms such as these. Or you may concentrate on small forms, such as a piece of wood, a pebble, a pixel, and so on, by looking unwaveringly at a small form.

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57. p. 103.
58. p. 103.

Second, you can meditate on a pure object, actually present or visualized. In this case, you should hold your gaze on, or one-pointedly visualize, objects such as a Buddha statue, picture, or image. You concentrate on every detail of the object with respect and devotion.

(b) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING INTERNAL

This form of meditation begins by visualizing a yidam deity or your guru on an eight-petalled lotus at your heart center. Alternatively, you may concentrate on a sphere of brilliant light that is their essence.

ii) CONCENTRATING WITHOUT AN OBJECT

This is meditation on emptiness-luminosity. The instruction is to concentrate on the great emptiness, the shūnyatā nature, of inner and outer phenomena, all at once. Or you can just rest evenly in great emptiness-luminosity.

iii) CONCENTRATING ON THE BREATH

This instruction is to practice and focus on the technique called vase breathing, if you can. Otherwise, count twenty-one sets of the breath one-pointedly and without any distractions.

In his presentation of concentration on the breath, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa discusses the "three levels of resting," that is, the three experiential stages that develop through the aforementioned practices of "settling the mind that has not settled." The mind rests: (1) like water falling from a mountain cliff, (2) like a slowly flowing river, and (3) like an unmoving ocean.

b) STABILIZING THE SETTLED MIND

After settling the mind, it is necessary to stabilize it through various methods. Here, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa presents two main practices: (i) Holding the Mind and (ii) The Nine Methods for Bringing the Mind to Rest.

i) HOLDING THE MIND

There are three different ways of holding the mind at rest: Holding Above, Holding Below, and the Yoga of Alternating.

(a) HOLDING ABOVE

With proper physical posture and your gaze directed upward, you are instructed to hold your mind on a white bindu, or dot, in the middle of a four-petalled lotus at your heart while holding your breath. As you exhale, think that the bindu exits through the opening of Brahmā and settles in the expanse of great space. This intensifies your awareness.

(b) HOLDING BELOW

Here, with proper physical posture and your gaze settled downward, you visualize a black bindu at the center of an upside-down four-petalled black lotus at your heart. This bindu slides downward and exits through your secret place. It moves downward until it settles with a heavy quality. Rest the mind on that one-pointedly.

(c) THE YOGA OF ALTERNATING

As needed, you can alternate these two methods. If your mind is too agitated, bring it down and settle it. If it is too dull, uplift it with clarity.

ii) THE NINE METHODS FOR BRINGING THE MIND TO REST

The nine methods for bringing the mind to rest are based on the sūtras. Although only briefly discussed by the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa, they form the classic presentation of the stages that are traversed to attain complete shamatha. From this overall viewpoint, they set forth the complete process of shamatha. On a smaller, more practical scale, these nine stages are present within each step of the practice of shamatha. The nine may be summarized through the following instructions:

1. PLACEMENT Place the mind by one-pointedly directing the attention to a given object.

2. CONTINUOUS PLACEMENT Rest in that placement for a long time.

3. DEFINITE PLACEMENT If a thought arises, immediately recognize it with mindfulness and rest in equipoise.

4. THOROUGH PLACEMENT Rest in equipoise, blending that stable resting with the previous resting state.

5. TAMING Generate joy by recollecting the excellent qualities of the resting mind and remain in that state.

6. PACIFICATION Rest the mind by being certain, identifying those conditions that stimulate thoughts, and counteracting any fixation on them.

7. THOROUGH PACIFICATION Recognize the essence of the causes of distraction and mental unhappiness and so forth, allowing the thoughts to be self-liberated.

8. CREATING A SINGLE CONTINUUM Through the force of meditating in that way, the mind naturally settles on the object and rests without any effort.

9. EVEN PLACEMENT In the end, be free from the distractions of being concerned about whether you are resting in meditative equipoise or not.

c) ENHANCING THE STABILIZATION

The Karmapa's instructions are to begin by directing your attention towards the sense objects, such as form, sound, or any other. Rest within the natural state of that experience. When thoughts arise, rest peacefully right within them. Do not regard them as a problem. Resting with the right balance of tight concentration and relaxation is the key to experiencing their natural state. The most powerful and supreme way to remove hindrances and enhance the practice at this stage is to supplicate the guru with complete devotion and merge your mind with the guru's mind.

B. MAHĀMUDRĀ VIPASHYANĀ

Jetsün Milarepa said:

> May I not be attached to the pond of shamatha,

And may the flower of vipashyanā blossom.[59]

The practitioner must develop the insight of vipashyanā meditation upon the foundation of shamatha meditation. You should not simply be content with the tranquility of shamatha meditation. You can achieve ultimate liberation and enlightenment only through the practice of vipashyanā meditation, because only through this practice can you realize the twofold egolessness or selflessness, the absolute truth. In the Mahāmudrā tradition, this is the juncture at which the teacher points out the nature of *thamal gyi shepa*, or ordinary mind. Many different pointing-out instructions may be presented. It is methodical, yet simple and without any form. In this section of the text on vipashyanā,[60] the ninth Karmapa presents the raw and naked state of the mahāmudrā path, the ordinary mind left to rest in naturalness without anything being altered.

1. Looking at the Abiding Nature, the Essence of Mind

Begin this session with a brief reflection on the preliminary practices and some shamatha sitting. You are instructed to look at the abiding nature of mind by relaxing at ease and letting the mind settle into itself. The essence of that resting mind is clear, vivid, naked, and fresh. Analyze mind's nature, whether it has any color, form, shape, and so forth, by looking repeatedly at the mind. Further, briefly examine the mind's arising, abiding, and departing. If nothing is found through searching the abiding mind, allow thoughts to manifest and analyze them.

2. Cutting through a Basis or Root of Mind

If you do not find anything when analyzing or searching, look and examine the searcher—the arising, abiding, and departing of that mind that is searching. Further, look at the nature of conceptual movement, the mind manifesting as movement, and see if the resting mind and the manifesting mind are the same or different.

59. *Rain Of Wisdom*, p. 181 (Shambhala Publications 1989).
60. p. 138.

Search again and again.

Furthermore, at this point, eleven applications are summarized through the following instructions:[61]

1. A COMPLETE SEARCH Continually search your mind-stream, asking, "Does the mind inherently exist or not? What is its essence like?"

2. AN INDIVIDUAL EXAMINATION Cut through by inquiring whether the mind has a color or shape; arises, abides, or departs; has a basis; and so forth.

3. A DETAILED ANALYSIS Look definitively for the searcher and that which searches.

4. SHAMATHA By searching, realize the mind's lack of inherent nature. Having determined the abiding nature of all phenomena, rest fully in the meaning of the profound.

5. VIPASHYANĀ By searching the essence of the resting mind itself in the same way you did before, fully realize its very essence.

6. UNIFICATION Shamatha and vipashyanā are not different; do not separate them.

7. CLARITY If dullness or sluggishness arises, bring to mind whatever stimulates it and uplift your mind.

8. NONCONCEPTUALITY When scattering or agitation occurs, exert yourself in the methods to pacify them.

9. EQUANIMITY When free from dullness or agitation, rest in the essence of the mind that was searched for, examined, and analyzed.

10. CONTINUITY Never be separated from this practice.

11. NONDISTRACTION Tightening your attention upon this practice, do not allow any occasion for distraction to arise.

Exert yourself again and again in cutting through a basis or root of mind by means of these eleven applications.

61. pp. 142–143.

3. Pointing Out the Nature of Mind by Means of Determining Awareness-Emptiness

It is important and helpful to do the preliminary practices at the beginning of all the pointing-out sessions. In this section, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa discusses how the experiences and realizations arise for three different types of individuals: the "instantaneous," "bypassing," and "gradual" types.[62] At this point, the instruction is: "Let the mind relax in its own state. Look nakedly, straight at (*rjen lhang gis*) the essence of the relaxed mind. Maintain continuous mindfulness, simply free from distraction. Whatever thoughts arise, do not do anything contrived, such as deliberately abandoning or adopting them—look at their very essence."[63]

a) Pointing Out the Nature of Mind on the Basis of Conceptual Movement

First, you are instructed to let your mind relax in its own state. Within that state, look directly at mind's very nature. Then, cause conceptual movement to manifest and look at what the difference is between the moving mind and the resting mind. Look and see what the difference is between the moving mind and the mind that looks at it. When you do this, conceptual movement is self-liberated. Rest one-pointedly in that state without distractions.

b) Pointing Out the Nature of Mind on the Basis of Appearances

This section of *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* goes through four stages of instructions pointing out (1) all appearances to be mind, (2) mind to be empty, (3) emptiness to be spontaneously present, and (4) spontaneous presence to be self-liberated.[64]

i) Pointing Out Appearances to Be Mind

All appearances are nothing other than mental appearances, like illusions and dreams. Examine whether forms, sounds, and so

62. p. 144.
63. p. 149.
64. p. 159.

forth, which are taken as focal objects, and the mind are the same or different. When you recognize that the body and mind are neither the same nor different, or that all objects that appear as something external do not exist apart from being the self-radiance of mind, rest openly without fixation in that state.

As the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* states:

> O sons and daughters of the victorious ones, these three realms are only mind.[65]

Also, Virūpa commented:

> All phenomena are the reflected appearances of mind-itself.[66]

Saraha taught:

> Mind is the root of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
> Realizing this, rest loosely without meditating.
> To leave aside your own [nature] and search elsewhere is extremely deluded.
> It is neither something nor is it not-something—everything is within the intrinsic state.[67]

ii) Pointing Out Mind to Be Empty

Mind-itself is empty—free from arising, abiding, and cessation—like the moon reflected in water. It does not exist as any thing. Its emptiness nature cannot be shown at all; it is beyond the expressions of speech or thought and resembles space. You are instructed to rest at ease within this uncontrived or unaltered state.

In the *Summary of the View*, Nāropa said:

> Reflexive awareness, free from elaborations,
> Appears yet is empty; it is empty yet it appears.
> Therefore, the inseparability of appearances and emptiness

65. p. 160.
66. p. 160.
67. p. 174–75.

Is like the moon [reflected] in water.
In this way, nonduality will be determined.[68]

Nyime Tsal advised:

The varieties [of appearances] are the magical display of mind.
Mind cannot be shown by saying, "This is it."
Therefore, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are free from a root.
Recognize this to be the dharmakāya.[69]

iii) POINTING OUT EMPTINESS TO BE SPONTANEOUSLY PRESENT

"Without moving from dharmatā, which is always empty like space, mind arises unceasingly as expressive power and radiance (*rtsal gdangs*), manifesting as the variety [of appearances]."[70] It is taught that whatever appearances may arise, they are none other than emptiness itself. Therefore, they are the spontaneously present inseparability of appearance and emptiness or bliss and emptiness.

As was said by the Great Abbot, Shāntarakṣhita:

Without moving from the expanse of equality, various magical displays manifest.
All the various streams have the same salty taste in the ocean.
The many are of one taste:[71] they have no differences.
Everything and all are blissful, being pervaded by the taste of the intrinsic state.[72]

68. p. 169.
69. p. 175.
70. p. 171.
71. The many are of one taste (*du ma ro gcig*): The varieties of appearances—i.e., "the many"—are of one taste in terms of their ultimate nature.
72. p. 175.

As it is said in the sūtras:

Form is empty; emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form; form is not other than emptiness.[73]

Lord Gampopa stated:

Become familiar with looking at your own mind.
When you are familiar with looking at your mind,
If you do not fall into the duality of objects and mind,
You will experience nondual wisdom.[74]

iv) POINTING OUT SPONTANEOUS PRESENCE TO BE SELF-LIBERATED

The spontaneously present nature is self-liberated because appearances are spontaneously present as great emptiness. From the very beginning, appearances, awareness, and emptiness are spontaneously present as the union of luminosity and emptiness. As this does not rely upon any remedies, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are beyond being something to reject or adopt, negate or establish—it is the ultimate self-liberation of mahāmudrā, and it is also the actualization of primordial awakening.

Tilopa advised:

Do not do anything with the mind: be free from all striving.
It is self-arisen and self-pacified, like ripples on the water.[75]

And he also said:

Cut through the root of your own mind: rest in naked awareness.

73. p. 168.
74. p. 178.
75. p. 110.

Allow the water [of mind] clouded by thoughts to clear.
Do not block or encourage appearances: leave them as they are.
When there is no adopting or rejecting, appearances are liberated as [mahā]mudrā.[76]

And:

Put aside all physical activities: rest leisurely in the natural state.
Do not express anything verbally: sounds are empty, like echoes.
Do not mentally contemplate anything: behold the ultimate.
The body has no essence: it is like a bamboo stalk.
Mind is like the center of space: it transcends being an object for thought.
Without adding to or removing [anything] from that state, rest at ease.[77]

It is said:

Whatever is a cause that binds
Is the path that liberates.
Here there is no bondage whatsoever;
Whatever binds liberates.[78]

PART III: THE CONCLUDING TOPICS

After discussing the main topic of the actual meditation, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa gives further instructions in this third part. Once some experience has been gained of the nature of mind that the guru is pointing out, four additional methods are presented: (A) Enhancing the Development of One's Practice and Becoming Proficient in It, (B) Removing Hindrances, (C) Progressing on the Path, and (D) The Way the Result Manifests.

76. p. 117.
77. p. 110.
78. p. 173.

A. ENHANCING PRACTICE

This section deals with the notion of conduct, the application of techniques to enhance the development of your practice. They are to be applied after receiving the instructions, found in the earlier sections, on the mahāmudrā view and meditation in general, and on shamatha and vipashyanā in particular.

The instructions on enhancing practice are divided into four categories: (1) Correcting the Five Types of Mistaken Ideas, (2) Training in the Three Skills, (3) Enhancing Development through Eliminating Deviations and Strayings, and (4) Enhancing Development through Crossing the Three Difficult Passages.

1. CORRECTING THE FIVE TYPES OF MISTAKEN IDEAS

a) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT OBJECTS

The mistaken ideas about objects arise from fixated attachment that solidifies positive, or virtuous, action as something to be adopted, and negative, or nonvirtuous, action as something to be rejected. A similar mistake is taking saṃsāra as something to be abandoned and nirvāṇa as something to be achieved. Thus the whole notion of eliminating one thing and replacing it with another is mistaken.

Such mistaken ideas can be corrected by recognizing that all such dualistic phenomena are of equal taste in the expanse of nondual wisdom. The ultimate nature of all phenomena is without any such contrast; the nature of ultimate or genuine reality is beyond virtue and nonvirtue. Nonetheless, in relative or apparent reality, positive and negative actions and similar phenomena function as interdependent arisings. Therefore, you need to understand positive and negative phenomena within the context of the two truths and address them accordingly.

b) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT TIME

The mistaken ideas about time arise from fixated attachment that solidifies the three times: past, present, and future. An example is fixating on the future as the time to achieve enlightenment by completing the three aeons of accumulations on the path. Even though time is a necessary device in a relative context, no such

reality of the three times exists in the ultimate nature. Therefore, you should correct such mistaken ideas through realizing that the three times do not exist as separate entities. They are equal and should not be taken to be real.

c) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about the Essence

The mistaken ideas about the essence arise from fixated attachment that solidifies the present mind as being negative. You believe that noble and positive wisdom will be attained only if the present mind is relinquished. This is a mistaken idea in the Mahāmudrā tradition, because there is no wisdom higher than the present mind itself. This mistake can be corrected through recognizing that the five wisdoms are spontaneously present, right from the beginning, as the natural state of your own mind.

d) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about the Nature

Mistaken ideas about the nature arise from fixated attachment that solidifies the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas of sentient beings as truly existing as they appear. Based on that, you then assert that there is a superior buddhahood to be attained that is other than mind, and hence you consider that it is impossible for completely pure buddhahood to exist within the mind-streams of impure sentient beings. In actual reality, there is no buddha apart from the mind, and you should not seek it anywhere other than in the realization of the nature of mind, mahāmudrā. Such mistaken ideas can be corrected through recognizing that the skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas are primordially of the nature of the male and female tathāgatas and the male and female deities.

e) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Knowledge

The mistaken ideas about prajñā, or knowledge, arise from fixated attachment that solidifies the view that the ultimate nature can be realized through merely the intellectual and logical processes of hearing and reflecting (analysis). Realization does not just arise from hearing and reflecting; this is so no matter how intelligent or precise a logician you may be. You can transcend these mistaken ideas through knowing that realization arises swiftly and only

through the power of blessings and the force of meditation for worthy students who continuously train in the dharma. The practitioner is advised to combine all three of these by practicing hearing, reflecting, and meditation.

As it is said:

> It is recognized by relying on the timing and methods of the guru
> And on your own merit.[79]

2. Training in the Three Skills

a) In the Beginning: The Skill in Initiating Meditation

Hold the essential points for the body properly as taught earlier. When a thought arises, look right at it and rest right within the thought. When the mind rests, look right at the essence of the resting mind. Simply rest within an unaltered, fresh, relaxed, and natural state without distraction and with recognition of your own nature.

b) In the Middle: The Skill in Suspending Meditation

You should meditate for a short period of time and then suspend your meditation, gradually lengthening the session. You should not make the length of time the main point, regardless of the way you rest the mind. You should be skilled in changing focus and physical posture and should not remain in one samādhi or posture for a long time. Do short but frequent sessions with sharpness, lucidity, and clarity. Do not leave your meditation session with a hateful feeling; instead, generate enthusiasm.

c) In the End: The Skill in Sustaining Experiences

When any of the three types of experience—bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality—arise, do not fixate on them or take them to be real. If you develop pride and attachment, what is called "losing

79. p. 188.

realizations after experiences"[80] will occur. Therefore, you should be skilled in sustaining experiences without any attachment to them. In other words, give up attachment or aversion towards positive or negative meditation experiences.

3. ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ELIMINATING DEVIATIONS AND STRAYINGS

a) ELIMINATING THE FOUR DEVIATIONS

i) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE BASIC NATURE OF OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

This deviation mainly refers to an intellectual understanding of emptiness that lacks the strong conviction that it is the basic nature of all things. Such an understanding is of a conceptually created emptiness, the belief that nothing whatsoever exists. You think that saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, virtue and nonvirtue, do not exist at all and are just empty. You may determine by means of scriptures, reasoning, listening, reflecting, and conventional expressions that the abiding nature of things is emptiness and say, "Since everything is empty, on what is there to meditate?" This understanding, "established" in a way that is a mere conceptual creation, is not correct and is called deviating from emptiness as the basic nature of objects of knowledge. It is important to develop the view, certainty, and realization of emptiness as the profound, ultimate prajñā, which is different from this deviation. You should gain confidence and realization of the right view.

ii) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE SEAL

This deviation is mainly fixation on emptiness. Without certainty in emptiness as the basic nature, you take things to be inherently existent, and think that they can become empty suddenly through such practices as saying the SHŪNYATĀ mantra and the like, and meditating on that. This "seal" or act of "sealing" is merely to think, label, or imagine that all things are empty; or to believe that emptiness is established through the utterance of a mantra or application of a concept. Hence you deviate into believing that you can conceptually "seal" or "label" interdependent appearances in this way. In so doing, you are creating emptiness conceptually, which is not a correct practice since it is not the actual emptiness.

80. p. 191.

iii) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE REMEDY

This deviation mainly is fixating on emptiness as a remedy. When kleshas or thoughts involving the three poisons arise, you think that they are negative and try to destroy them with emptiness. You then rest evenly in the resultant "emptiness." You may even take pride in having eradicated the mental afflictions and so forth with emptiness. This is taking what is to be abandoned and the remedy to be separate, which is a deviation from emptiness as the remedy. This deviation is corrected by looking at the very nature of the factors to be abandoned.

iv) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE PATH

When you think that meditation on emptiness serves as the path and that only later will you attain fruition, this is deviating from emptiness as the path. There is no separation between path and result in terms of emptiness. This deviation also refers to thinking that there is no path other than emptiness and disregarding all the skillful-means practices, such as compassion. This deviation is corrected by recognizing the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and by being free from striving.

b) ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ELIMINATING STRAYING IN MEDITATION

If you are attached to the experiences of bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality, you will stray into the three realms—the realms of desire, form, and formlessness, respectively. The teaching is to abandon fixations on these experiences, since you should be free from attachments, and arouse diligence. In this section, the ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, details seventeen points to be considered in enhancing development by the elimination of straying in meditation. When these techniques are put into practice, enhancement gives rise to the result.

4. ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CROSSING THE THREE DIFFICULT PASSAGES

a) EMPTINESS ARISING AS AN ENEMY

When you look at and analyze the essence of mind, you see that it does not truly exist as anything. You may think that if all phenomena are only emptiness, then virtue and evil, and causes and results do not exist. With such a view, known as "glibness,"[81] you fail to take up virtue and to reject evil. This is termed "emptiness arising as an enemy" and should be avoided like poison. This fault can be remedied by training in the path that integrates the view and conduct while you remain within the state of emptiness.

b) COMPASSION ARISING AS AN ENEMY

When you achieve some bliss in samādhi, you may think, "I must liberate all sentient beings who lack this." You may put aside your own samādhi and dharma practice, although you have not perfected it, and act for the welfare of others. This conduct will only exhaust yourself and others. This is called "compassion arising as an enemy"[82] and should be avoided. While remaining in a state of compassion for others, you should continuously maintain your own dharma practice and sustain your realization.

c) CAUSE AND RESULT ARISING AS AN ENEMY

If you think, "In order to see the profound nature of reality or the true nature of mind, I must become well-informed in all aspects of knowledge and the sciences," and take up the study of such subjects as language, valid cognition, and so forth, neglecting the practice of shamatha and vipashyanā, that is called "the straying where an idea about cause and result arises as an enemy." Putting aside the true dharma practice to take up this type of study is not the correct practice. This fault can be corrected by meditating one-pointedly on the union of emptiness and cause and result, whereby you attain the stainless knowledge that is not ignorant of any of the phenomena of saṃsāra or nirvāṇa.

81. p. 203.
82. p. 204.

B. REMOVING HINDRANCES

This section includes three parts: (1) Removing the Hindrance of Illnesses, (2) Removing the Hindrance of Demons, and (3) Removing the Hindrances to Samādhi.

1. REMOVING THE HINDRANCE OF ILLNESSES

By meditating mainly on shamatha and vipashyanā, wind-related illnesses as well as phlegm- and bile-related illnesses will be corrected. Also, hot and cold illnesses will be gradually corrected by shamatha and vipashyanā. You may also apply meditation instructions as remedies. One important instruction is to analyze the essence, shape, and arising, abiding, and departing of illnesses. You can also specially apply the practice of "taking and sending" (*tong-len*) meditation to illnesses. The most profound instruction, in the ultimate sense, is to see the true nature of illness as the four kāyas—the nonarising of illness is the dharmakāya; its nonabiding is the sambhogakāya; its unceasingness is the nirmāṇakāya; and its empty nature is the svabhāvakāya. Bring illness onto the path as the play of the four kāyas and look at its very nature.

2. REMOVING THE HINDRANCE OF DEMONS (DÖNS)

It is said:

> Your own mind is a hindrance.
> Your own mind is called "māra."
> All obstructing spirits arise from thoughts.
> Therefore, cut through thoughts.[83]

Demons, or döns, appear from the delusion of your own mind, and yet they do not, in fact, truly exist. Knowing that, you cut through the basis and root of demons, or döns. Or you can practice taking and sending, you can bring them to the path as the four kāyas, and so forth. What appear as demons are the magical displays of mind and mind-itself; when they are brought onto the path in such a way, they are removed.

83. p. 208.

3. Removing the Hindrances to Samādhi

The hindrances to samādhi are categorized as either dullness or agitation. These hindrances are removed by meditation techniques, such as guru yoga, looking at their essence, and the like. Further, for either dullness or agitation—whichever arises—rest relaxed within its essence, without distraction, without meditating, and without fabricating. It is sufficient to meditate on the essence; in this profound Mahāmudrā tradition, no remedies need be applied because the hindrances are self-liberated. The general methods for correcting the problems of dullness and agitation were presented previously in the text. In this section, Wangchuk Dorje describes how to correct these hindrances through the methods of guru yoga.

C. The Way to Progress on the Path

Progress on the path is presented through the four yogas of mahāmudrā. Each of these is divided into lesser, intermediate, and greater, which creates twelve levels or yogas. Nevertheless, it is said that mahāmudrā generally does not depend on progressing gradually on the path.

As Shang Rinpoche said:

> Mahāmudrā itself is a single stride.
> Fools who delineate stages and paths are deluded.[84]

However, in order to guide disciples temporarily, it is not a contradiction to present the way to progress on the path, or to present the path according to the understanding of the gradual type of individual.

1. The Yoga of One-Pointedness[85]

One-pointedness is to rest in the inseparability of shamatha and vipashyanā, which is the correct recognition of the nature of mind. It is to rest vibrantly and vividly within unceasing clarity-emptiness, which is without center or end, like space. This has three levels: lesser, intermediate, and greater. Lesser is to see the essence of bliss and clarity. Intermediate is to master samādhi. Greater is when that experience is continuous.

2. The Yoga of Freedom from Elaborations

Freedom from elaborations is to realize that all phenomena are empty and that mind-itself is free from a root. When you are freed from the conceptual elaborations concerning the arising, abiding, and ceasing of dualistic phenomena and fixation on their characteristics, superimpositions concerning unborn emptiness are cut through. Lesser is to realize that your own mind is nonarising. Intermediate is when the apprehension of appearances and the apprehension of emptiness are realized to be free from a basis or root. Greater is when the superimpositions of elaborations concerning phenomena are cut through.

3. The Yoga of One Taste

One taste is when all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa arise as one taste. The yoga of one taste is the blending of appearances and mind. All phenomena that can appear are neither free nor not free from the elaborations of arising, abiding, and ceasing; they are neither empty nor not empty; they are neither something to stop nor something to produce; and they are neither something to abandon nor something to adopt. They are equal with the intrinsic state. Lesser is when all dualistic phenomena are blended as equal taste. Intermediate is when appearances and mind are like water poured into water. Greater is when all phenomena are pacified within equality.

4. The Yoga of Nonmeditation

Nonmeditation is when there is no object of meditation and no meditator. It is the utter exhaustion of the relative mind. Lesser is when there is no object of meditation and no meditator. Intermediate is to take hold of the very place of spontaneous presence. Greater is when, through the mixing of the mother and child luminosities, you are absorbed in the expanse of wisdom, the dharma-

84. p. 211.
85. The following summaries of the four yogas and the three stages of each are also set out in Appendix II, pp. 328–30.

dhātu. The two benefits are perfected and you are completely awakened.

D. The Way the Result Manifests

Through practicing in this way through the twelve levels of the four yogas, you will cut through the two obscurations and all habitual tendencies will be completely eliminated with the sword of prajñā. The full bloom of the wisdom of the twofold knowledge is complete, and you attain actual buddhahood. You achieve what is called the "dharmakāya throne of nonmeditation." While not moving from the dharmakāya, which is for your own benefit, activity to benefit others through the two form kāyas continues, without the involvement of thoughts, effort, or elaborations, until saṃsāra is emptied. This is the spontaneously present pervasive nature.

Part IV: The Supplementary Topics

In this section, the ninth Gyalwang Karmapa discusses five supplementary topics. In brief: (A) Identifying the Essence of Mahāmudrā points out clearly the essence or the nature of mahāmudrā and the ordinary mind; (B) The Classifications: Ground, Path, and Fruition Mahāmudrā discusses in detail, from the viewpoint of the great insight of the mahāmudrā instructions, ground, path, and fruition mahāmudrā; (C) The Explanation of the Term provides extensive details on the meaning and definition of "mahāmudrā"; (D) The Difference between Mahāmudrā and Connate Union very clearly distinguishes the difference between mahāmudrā and the connate, or coemergent, union, and provides more details on the definition of mahāmudrā; (E) The Way the Result Manifests from Practice further considers the fruition of the mahāmudrā practices, which was discussed earlier in the section "The Way the Result Manifests."

The Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje completes his explanations and practice instructions with a colophon and dedication.

This concludes a brief look at the preliminaries, the actual practice, and the concluding topics of *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*.

Conclusion: The Mahāmudrā Lineage Today

Today, fortunate students may continue to inherit the living transmission of this lineage of mahāmudrā from the masters of the Kagyü lineages, especially His Holiness the Gyalwang Karmapa, Ugyen Drodul Trinley Dorje, the most authoritative master of the lineage. Because of the fortunate karma of beings and auspicious interdependent connections, as well as the ripening of the aspirations of the Buddha Karmapa, His Holiness is presently in India, teaching, furthering his studies, and benefiting many students.

Translating the Text into English

With the blessings of the lineage and my gurus, and especially due to the command of Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, I worked on this translation with Elizabeth Callahan and am very happy to have this opportunity to bring *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* into another language.

I have had the great fortune to receive the Kagyü lineage transmissions of both mahāmudrā and the Vajrayāna tantras from the buddha in person, His Holiness the sixteenth Gyalwang Karmapa, Rangjung Khyapdak Rikpe Dorje. I received the instructions and transmission of this treatise, *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, in great detail twice from master Vajradhara, Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, to whom I am forever indebted for his kindness in bestowing the full transmissions of the lineage of sūtra, tantra, mahāmudrā, and ati.

I also received *Mahāmudrā: Pointing Out the Dharmakāya* from mahāpaṇḍita and mahāsiddha Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, one of my most esteemed teachers; and *Mahāmudrā: Illuminating The Darkness of Ignorance* from the previous venerable Dhilyak Dabzang Rinpoche, who was a great yogi and important master of the Kagyü lineage, full of great humor and great insight, and a very compassionate teacher. My joy in meeting my masters and having the opportunity to study and practice is immeasurable.

It is my hope, aspiration, and dream to transplant and propagate the genuine buddhadharma, and specifically the Vajrayāna lineage, here and in other cultures and languages of this universe.

My heartfelt thanks goes to the translator, Elizabeth Callahan, who worked very hard and has done a wonderful job in translating this treatise. I would also like to single out for special thanks the

Hwa Yue Foundation, Ms. Sun, and Dr. Chen Li-An and family, without whose generous support this publication would not have come to fruition. I also thank all the patrons and staff of Nitartha *international* around the world; and, especially, Anita and Albert Ho, and How Yok Bee, who have made it possible for me and our staff to continue these activities of preserving, editing, publishing, and translating the work of the great masters of the Kagyü and Nyingma lineages. I would like to dedicate the merits that we accumulate through this project, so that this work may benefit a countless multitude of beings.

The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche
Nalandabodhi
Seattle, Washington
U.S.A.
February 7, 2001

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

I began this translation of *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* (*Nges don rgya mtsho*) in 1991, when Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche first started teaching the text to students in North America and Europe. His teachings have continued over the last ten years, and I have therefore had the great good fortune of hearing his illuminating explanations of various sections of the text a number of times. In 1994 The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche expressed an interest in publishing a translation of the entire text, and since then he has answered questions with unfailing generosity and patience. He has listened while I read page after page of preliminary drafts, carefully considering each point and, when necessary, referring to his own notes on the teachings of Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche.

Although I could spend many more years studying this text and practicing the meditations it describes, the time comes when one must offer what one has learned to others, hoping that it will be of some benefit and that its shortcomings and errors will be quickly rectified by exposure to the broad scrutiny of teachers and other translators.

In keeping with the tradition of oral instructions, I have relied on my teachers for clarification, and over the years they have patiently answered my endless questions. To them I owe whatever in this translation conveys the power and insight of the original, while whatever is defective or inadequate in it is entirely mine. Specifically, Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche taught the entire text, with the exception of the preliminary section. The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche closely reviewed the entire vipashyanā section, line by line, and answered detailed questions on the rest.

Āchārya Tenpa Gyaltsen Negi clarified the preliminary section and the supplementary topics. Alak Zenkar Rinpoche carefully checked the Tibetan text and provided headings for the teaching sessions and meditation sessions. In addition, Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, Tenga Rinpoche, Āchārya Sherab Gyaltsen, Lama Chönam, Lama Phuntsok Bist, and Lama Tashi Döndrup all kindly gave of their time and knowledge. I thank them all most sincerely for their wisdom and generosity.

Wangchuk Dorje, the author of *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, quotes the great masters of mahāmudrā and numerous sūtras, tantras, and treatises. I have, whenever possible, consulted commentaries on these texts, such as Dolpopa's commentary on the *Highest Continuum* (*Uttaratantra*); Jamgön Lodrö Thaye's commentary on the *Two-Part Hevajra Tantra* (*rGyud brtag gnyis*); Ngulchu Togme's and Khenpo Kunzang Palden's commentaries on *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva* (*Bodhicharyāvatāra*); and Mipham's commentary on the *Ornament for Clear Realization* (*Abhisamayālaṃkāra*). I have also provided the chapter and verse numbers for the quotations when I could; this is not complete and was not done for scholarly purposes, but to provide those so inclined with a convenient means of consulting the original texts.

I have also referred to the teachings on *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* given by Tralek Rinpoche and to translations of various parts of the text by Michele Martin, Jules Levinson, and Jim Scott. My thanks to all of them.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Since *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* is an instruction manual for teachers and students and it is hoped that it will be used for teaching and study in conjunction with the Tibetan text, the page numbers of the Rumtek woodblock version have been included in the margins.

TREATMENT OF TIBETAN AND SANSKRIT WORDS Numerous Sanskrit words and a few Tibetan ones have now become accepted among English-speaking practitioners. These are not italicized in the text and most are defined in the English-Tibetan glossary.

The Tibetan, and in some cases the Sanskrit, has been provided for technical terms on their first occurrence. The transliteration system of Turrel Wylie has been used; though this is not pronounceable by those who do not read Tibetan, it is an accurate, uniform system that will enable Tibetan students to identify the words.

TRANSLATION STYLE There are two approaches to translation, a literal word translation (*tshig 'gyur*) and meaning translation (*don 'gyur*). Most translators, myself included, try to combine these two. I have tried to remain faithful to the original without sacrificing meaning. For this reason, I have used square brackets to enclose words and phrases that are added to the translation; they should not be confused with parentheses, which are used in the standard fashion. Whenever possible, the words in square brackets have been provided by or checked with Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche or The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche.

I have tried to maintain a consistent style throughout the translation, though, since a Tibetan word may have various shades of meaning depending on the context, this has not always been possible. For example, the word *'dzin pa* can mean both "fixate" and "apprehend," the first implying conceptualization, the latter not necessarily. By consulting the glossaries, readers will be able to gain an understanding of the various ways in which particular terms are used and how they have been translated.

FOOTNOTES AND ENDNOTES In order to share some of the commentary by Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, and others, some clarifying comments have been included; however, no attempt has been made to provide all the "answers," since the text should be studied and practiced under the guidance of a lineage master. The endnotes include items of a more technical nature: completion of partially quoted verses; Sanskrit and Tibetan for text titles; spelling mistakes in the Rumtek woodblock version of *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* and Wangchuk Dorje's *The Summary Root Verses*.

Abbreviations used in footnotes:

Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche (KTGR)
The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche (DPR)
Āchārya Tenpa Gyaltsen Negi (ATGN)
Āchārya Sherab Gyaltsen (ASG)
Lama Tashi Döndrup (LTD)

APPENDICES Appendix I: *The Summary Root Verses*. A short text written by Wangchuk Dorje that provides an overview of the preliminaries, actual practice, and concluding topics. Although the Tibetan text is in verse, the translation is in prose to facilitate ease of reading.

Appendix II: *Opening the Door to the Definitive Meaning*. A somewhat longer, though still brief, text by Bokar Rinpoche that "can be used either as summarizing root verses or for combining recitation and meditation."

Appendix III: Götsangpa's Table of the Four Yogas: This shows Götsangpa's view of the correspondence between the four yogas and the paths and bhūmis.

Appendix IV: The text outline and lists of the teaching sessions and meditation sessions compiled by Alak Zenkar Rinpoche.

GLOSSARIES (1) English-Tibetan glossary: This includes definitions of technical terms and enumerations of categories. Words or phrases defined in the English-Tibetan glossary are marked with a † on their first appearance in the text.

(2) Experiential Words glossary: These are words used uniquely in Mahāmudrā (and Mahāsandhi) traditions, sometimes with no literal meaning. (The Tibetan for them is given on each occurrence in the text.) They convey the sense of various meditation experiences and their meaning must be learned from realized masters. A separate glossary has been provided to give some comments by Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche and The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche.

(3) Tibetan-English glossary: A list of Tibetan words with the translation equivalents for many of the key terms in the text.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The translation has been greatly improved by the editorial and proofreading expertise of Migme Chödrön, Olive Colon, Richard Marshall, and Tingdzin Ötro.

Various parts of the translation were included in the transcripts of teachings given by Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche at Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center and Karmê Chöling in 1991, 1994, and 1995, and benefited accordingly from the sharp

eyes of the Nālandā Translation Committee and its editors. *The Summary Root Verses* began as a group translation effort with The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, by Tingdzin Ötro, Anne Stevens, Scott Wellenbach, and myself at Gampo Abbey in 1994. My thanks also go to my readers and friends who have contributed generously to the translation and improved it with their suggestions: Yeshe Gyamtso, the retreatants of Söpa Chöling, Lyle Weinstein, Alex Wilding, Ryu Yoshida, and Chryssoula Zerbini. Particular thanks to Scott Wellenbach for his generous help in many areas right up to the end.

Special thanks to the indexers, John and Susan Neumeier, and to John for his computer expertise, without which the glossaries might never have emerged from my computer.

On the computer end, to Gerry Wiener for his expertise, programs, and the Sambhota and diacritic fonts. To Tenzin Namdak for the diacritic font and other help. To Thomas Alexander and Jirka Hladiš for the many hours they devoted to the formatting of the book, with particular thanks to Jirka for his efforts. To Stephanie Johnston for getting us to the printer. And finally special thanks to Marty and Lynne Marvet for their continuous support, assistance, and friendship from the beginning to the end.

I also wish to thank those who supported the translation. Many thanks to all the patrons of Nitartha *international* who made this possible: foremostly the Hwa Yue Foundation, and David Beach, Deborah Calloway, Gampo Abbey, Kerstin Müller, Jan Puckett, Mark Seibold, Jose Tirado, and Patrick Walsh. And to all my friends who have been supportive over the years, especially: Christine Johnson and Carl Manz, Hara Kalomiri, Gale McDonald, Susan Page, and Jean Thies.

And finally, but not least, I wish to thank all the centers and individuals who provided the environment for these teachings to be given or their homes for me to stay in: Cha'an Retreat Center, Tenerife, Canary Islands; Gampo Abbey, Nova Scotia, Canada; Karmê Chöling, Barnet, Vermont; Kagyü Thegsum Shedra, Athens, Greece; Kagyü Thubten Chöling, Wappingers Falls, New York; Mahāmudrā Retreat-Zentrum, Halscheid, Germany; Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center, Red Feather Lakes, Colorado; Yonten Ling, Belgium; Sky Brooks, Virginia Evans, Cindy Haney,

Terry Hadford and Robert Pounder, Wendy Nelson, and Ines Wouters.

Whatever merit there has been in studying, practicing, and translating this text and whatever there will be in its continued teaching, study, and practice is dedicated to the flourishing of the traditions of practice and study of the definitive meaning, mahāmudrā. May all beings who come into contact with these teachings realize mahāmudrā. May there be peace and harmony for all as a result.

Elizabeth Callahan
Otego, New York
U.S.A.
March 2001

NOTE FROM NITARTHA *INTERNATIONAL*

Nitartha *international* is a nonprofit educational corporation, founded in 1994 by The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche for the purpose of preserving the living traditions of Asian cultures. Nitartha's goal is to marry modern methods of scholarship and personal-computer technology to the essential core of the Tibetan educational traditions. In order to be able to do so, we rely greatly on the guidance of traditional Tibetan teachers, such as the renowned scholar and adept Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, whose mastery of the oral and written systems of Tibetan knowledge informs all of Nitartha's work.

Nitartha preserves and publishes in various forms literature from the humanities, arts, and sciences written by scholars and adepts from the Nyingma and Kagyü traditions, two of the four major schools of Tibetan learning. We publish in the Tibetan language and also translate texts into other languages, in both print and digital media. All our publications seek to apply the highest standards of scholarship and editing, and we supplement these publications with a cornucopia of reference tools, such as indices, glossaries, and sophisticated sectioning. Yet there is something more important to the preservation of the literature and wisdom of Tibet.

More than mere written words, Tibetan texts are explained through an oral commentarial tradition that reaches back thousands of years. Through the extraordinary educational systems of the Tibetan Nyingma and Kagyü traditions, and the master teach-

ers who have overcome enormous obstacles to continue their work in those schools, Tibetan texts are still being taught today and infused with this living oral tradition.

Amidst the difficult changes that have characterized recent Tibet, precious treatises and works of art are in danger of being entirely lost. The educational systems that those texts anchor are equally endangered. The wisdom embodied in these traditions will no longer be available if we cannot support the publication of the texts as well as the educational systems in which their meaning is explained.

To preserve precious texts and works of art that are in danger of disappearing, Nitartha *international* brings together prominent scholars and adepts within the Tibetan academy and at leading Western colleges and universities, experienced Tibetan translators, publishing professionals, software programmers, and technology specialists. Using the most recent methods of scholarship and technological tools, Nitartha integrates the resources of the personal computer age with Tibetan educational systems. All facets of our activity are guided by the work of adepts in the oral traditions, so that the final publications convey the authentic meanings of these texts. In this way, the embodied wisdom of the Tibetan textual and oral traditions may benefit the rest of the world.

Nitartha's ability to preserve these priceless traditions and to identify the definitive meaning of Tibetan treatises would not be possible without the leadership of The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, who is at home in the worlds of traditional and recent Tibetan scholarship, as well those of western educational methods and technologies.

Rinpoche founded Nitartha *international* in order to be able to provide the modern world with timeless texts like *Mahāmudrā: The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*. This classic mahāmudrā treatise illustrates the superb accomplishments that may be achieved through the collaboration of traditional Tibetan scholars with translators able to work with the oral tradition, and with publishing professionals able to apply modern technologies to present traditional literature. By publishing such a work, Nitartha *international* is doing its part to keep the extraordinary accomplishments of the culture of Tibet alive.

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NOTE FROM NALANDABODHI

Nalandabodhi is a nonprofit religious corporation dedicated to continuing the genuine lineage of Tibetan Buddhism within the modern international community. Established by The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche in 1997, Nalandabodhi has main centers and study groups in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia.

Over the past few decades, Buddhism has been introduced into many diverse cultures throughout the world. Individuals from these different countries who have entered the Buddhist spiritual path must find ways to integrate that path into their own cultural circumstances. Rinpoche founded Nalandabodhi to make the genuine teachings of the Buddha available to such individuals.

As The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche has written elsewhere, from the Buddhist point of view, the teachings of the Buddha are not so much a religion as a science that works with the very basic nature of our mind, totally free from any theistic view. These teachings are, at their core, free from any cultural forms. Like pure water, buddhadharma has no intrinsic shape or color. Depending upon the container into which it is poured, water will adopt the particular shape and reflect the specific colors of the container.

Nalandabodhi centers have been established as the containers for the pure water of Buddhism, being poured into the varying circumstances of different countries and cultures. Students at Nalandabodhi study and practice under the direction of The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche and Rinpoche's main teacher, Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche.

The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche has a special role in assuring

the transmission of the genuine teachings of the Nyingma and Kagyü traditions of Buddhism. As abbot of Dzogchen Monastery, Rinpoche is a high-ranking Nyingma master. In addition, in 1979 at Dharmachakra Center, Rumtek, Sikkim, India, His Holiness, the sixteenth Gyalwang Karmapa, supreme head of the Kagyü lineage, formally empowered and officially proclaimed the seventh Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche as one of the lineage holders of the Karma Kagyü school and heart son of His Holiness Karmapa. Formally trained within the Tibetan academic system, Rinpoche graduated in 1991 from Karma Shri Nalanda Institute, the Kagyü shedra in Rumtek, Sikkim, and since has studied, taught and lived in North America, while traveling throughout the world educating and training students.

Nalandabodhi programs provide students with a complete, graduated curriculum of dharma study and practice, along with appropriate textbooks and practice materials. Projects central to the activities of Nalandabodhi are the publication of the oral commentaries of important contemporary teachers; the translation and publication of the religious texts of significant historic teachers; and the support of communication between the western and international Buddhist saṅghas.

Currently, Nalandabodhi is in the process of establishing the Mahasiddhi Retreat Center in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. This facility will serve as a retreat, educational facility, and library for students or scholars wishing to engage either in intensive study and practice programs or in solitary retreats.

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Martin Marvet
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March 1, 2001

Mahāmudrā

The Ocean of Definitive Meaning

THE INTRODUCTION

I supplicate the glorious guru Vajradhara 1b
To adorn the crown of my head, inseparable from me.
This profound topic, *The Essence of the Ocean of Definitive Meaning*,†
Is written in accordance with the teachings of the precious Kagyü.

There are individuals who, motivated by [their reflection on] death and impermanence and a recognition of saṃsāra† as being an ocean of suffering, have cast away concerns for this life and developed the deep conviction that the six classes of beings† have been their parents. They wish to attain true, complete buddhahood for the sake of all [beings] and, moreover, wish to attain buddhahood in this very lifetime, with this very body, through relying upon the ultimate short path of the Secret Mantra Vajrayāna.
Such individuals, who are solely concerned with their next lives, 2f
should be advised with the following words: "It is excellent that you wish to practice the essence of the profound topic." However, if their mental inclinations are not understood, you will not know how to guide them; it is uncertain where they will go, like arrows shot without seeing the target. Because the natures and faculties of sentient beings vary, it is necessary to teach in a way that accords with their particular mind-streams.

[REMARKS TO STUDENTS]

For those of you who have already received instructions, your previous general knowledge or mere dry intellectual understanding is 2b
not sufficient: each guru has his or her own dharma tradition. For

those who are spiritual mentors† of the Mantra or Characteristic [Vehicles], just referring to the words of the texts and treatises is not sufficient: in this [practice], you must have certainty in the recognition that comes from experience. Although there are many types of pointing-out instructions (Tib. *ngo sprod*), you should now concentrate exclusively on those pointing-out instructions I have given, in which I have not included numerous other elaborations. Your practice should not be modified in accordance with philosophical tenets or contrived by [the application of] remedies; it should be deep and should penetrate your mind-stream. Bring back your experiences and realizations, whatever manifestations† develop.

In the precious Kagyü [tradition], there are, in accordance with the faculties and mental levels of individuals, numerous modes of explanation for the practice of the profound instructions. The exalted Dakpo Rinpoche guided students who were worthy recipients by using, from among such [approaches], the path of method (*thabs lam*) that was transmitted by the exalted Milarepa. He guided the majority using the gradual path (*lam rim*) that was transmitted in the Kadampa [tradition]. All of those [numerous modes of instruction] should follow [one of] these [two approaches]. The Kadampa lineage contains three transmissions: the lineage of vast conduct,† the lineage of the profound view,† and the lineage of practice [based on] blessings.† Since the latter was transmitted by
3f Tilopa and Nāropa, [all of these approaches], in fact, definitely come down to the same point.

In general, individuals who have awakened the potential (*rigs*) for [following] one of the three yānas† should be guided on the specific paths, from one to the next; therefore, numerous delineations and enumerations are made [regarding the paths]. However, the present perspective is that of the practice of individuals who have not even a hair's worth of concern for their own benefit or for the aims of this life, who recognize that the six classes of beings have been their kind parents, and who are in a hurry to achieve complete buddhahood for their sake. Such [individuals] are said to be of the Mahāyāna potential, with the sharpest faculties. Nevertheless, since the faculties of individuals can change, it is possible for dull faculties to become sharp; for those who are of the lower potential, who have not awakened [the superior potential], to

awaken the superior potential; and for those who were not worthy recipients of the instructions to become worthy. Therefore, all of these types should engage in the preliminary practices for the gradual instructions in order to train themselves. By doing so, they will become fortunate beings in whose mind-streams the actual practice will develop.

The preliminary practices are classified as being either a longer and indirect [preliminary] or a shorter and direct [preliminary]. Atīsha explained that the former is the path for beings of lesser and intermediate [abilities] and that the latter is the path for great beings. In accordance with that, the exalted Dakpo Rinpoche taught four dharmas,[1] each of which must precede [the subsequent
ones]. 3b

As for those who give the instructions: The best must have perfected the excellent qualities of relinquishment and realization† and be able to assess the level of a student's mind-stream. Although [all gurus] may not be like that, they should [at least] be persons for whom [the instructions] are not just something they claim to have requested, received, or meditated on. [A guru] should be someone who can guide [students] according to the unmistaken experiences that have arisen through "bringing rock to meet bone."[a]

[Gurus] should avoid the crowd-pleasing instructions of charlatans, the ostentatious instructions of the ambitious, the textual instructions of those with little intelligence, and the superficial instructions of those of high rank. Instead, [their instructions] should accord with the word-instructions of paṇḍitas, the direct instructions of great meditators, the experiential instructions of yogins or yoginīs, the mind instructions of realized beings, and the "pointing-out instructions for old women."[b]

To practice such instructions, you must not be carried away by laziness and distractions. The mind is gullible and external objects

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a. Bringing rock to meet bone (*rdo rus gtugs*): A colloquial Tibetan expression implying precision and perseverance; it derives from the process for making meat soup by breaking bones with a rock to extract the marrow. (KTGR and ATGN)

b. See individual glossary entries for explanations.

are dazzling and seductive, and so there is the danger that you will be overwhelmed by them. To prevent that, it is necessary to present the following in sequence:

1. The Preliminaries
2. The Actual Practice
3. The Concluding Topics

PART I
THE PRELIMINARIES

A. The Common Preliminaries
B. The Uncommon Preliminaries
C. The Special Preliminaries

The Four Common Preliminaries

A. The Four Common Preliminaries

This has four sections:

1. The Precious Human Existence
2. Death and Impermanence
3. Karmic Causes and Results
4. The Faults of Saṃsāra

1. The Meditation on the Difficulties of Acquiring the Leisures and Opportunities [of a Precious Human Existence]

Teaching Session 1 and Meditation Session 1 4f

To begin with, you must understand and develop certainty about the difficulties of acquiring the leisures and opportunities [of a precious human existence]. As is said in the *Ornament of Liberation*:[2]

> The support is the supreme, precious human body.

As for what is called a "precious human existence endowed with the leisures and opportunities": It has leisure (*dal ba*) because it is free from the negative activities in which the leisure that produces the elevated states† and definite goodness† is absent. It has opportunities (*'byor ba*) because it is endowed with excellent activities, which produce the elevated states and definite goodness. It is also said:

> There is the leisure to be interested in virtue and the opportunity to take up virtue. Furthermore, there is leisure because the eight states without leisure have been avoided, and there are opportunities because it is endowed with the ten opportunities.

The eight states without leisure (*mi khom pa'i gnas brgyad*) are described in the *Compendium of Abhidharma:*[3]

> To be a hell-being, a hungry ghost, or an animal,
> To be a barbarian, or a long-lived god,
> To hold wrong views, or [to be born in places] devoid of buddhas, or
> To be dumb: these are the eight states with no leisure.

As for the ten opportunities, it is said:

> To be a human, to be born in a central land, to have complete sense faculties,
> To not be perverted by extreme karma, and to possess faith in the sources [of refuge]...

are the five personal opportunities (*rang 'byor lnga*). It is further said:

> A buddha having appeared, the dharma having been taught,
> The enduring of the teachings, their followers,
> And those who have affection for others...

are the five opportunities [provided by] others (*gzhan 'byor lnga*), making ten in all. These constitute what is known as a "precious human body endowed with the eight leisures and the ten opportu-
4b nities."

Since this is difficult to acquire and very beneficial, its qualities are similar to those of something precious, and so it is called "precious." In particular, only a human body in Jambudvīpa† can be the vajra body endowed with the six elements† [necessary] to achieve awakening† in one lifetime through the Vajrayāna path. It is the result of having previously engaged in virtuous actions, rejected negative actions, and gathered the accumulations [of merit and wisdom]; therefore, it is exceedingly rare.

Why is [a precious human existence] difficult to acquire? Compared to[4] the eight states without leisure, the precious human body capable of practicing the genuine dharma is very rare. Thus, this present human body with the leisures and opportunities to engage in the dharma is like a daytime star.

What is difficult to acquire? This precious human body endowed with the eight leisures and ten opportunities. How difficult is it to acquire? [The number of beings in] the three lower states† is similar to the [number of] atoms in a vast land. [The number of] ordinary human beings is likened to the [number of] atoms on top of a finger nail. As for our present attainment of this supreme human body, it is said:[5]

> Like a turtle putting its neck through
> A yoke floating about on a vast ocean,
> The human state is extremely difficult to attain.

Chandragomin commented:

> Having attained that which brings the ocean of rebirths to an end and
> Plants the virtuous seeds of supreme awakening— 5f
> A human existence, whose excellent qualities surpass those of a wish-fulfilling-jewel—
> Who could let this be fruitless?
>
> The path achieved by a person with great strength of mind
> Is not achieved by gods and nāgas,
> And is not for demigods, garuḍas,† vidyādharas,† kiṃnaras,† and uragas.†

Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva[6] states:

> These leisures and opportunities are extremely difficult to acquire.
> [With them,] beings will achieve their aims.

The *Bodhisattva Section Sūtra*[7] says:

> It is difficult to become a human;
> It is difficult to acquire the human life-force.

It is difficult to receive the genuine dharma;
It is difficult for a buddha to appear.

The *White Lotus of Compassion Sūtra*[8] also states:

It is difficult to find a human birth.
It is difficult to find the excellent leisures.
It is difficult to find a buddha appearing in the world.
It is difficult to find the aspiration for the virtuous qualities.
It is difficult to find pure aspiration prayers.

There are infinite such sayings to be found in the sūtras† and tantras.†

5b Consider your body to be a boat with which you must cross over the ocean of saṃsāra, a horse upon which you must flee the difficult passages of saṃsāra, and a servant whom you must employ in virtuous actions. As is said:[9]

Relying on the boat of a human [body],
Free yourself from the great river of suffering.
It will be difficult to find this boat later—
Fool, do not sleep at this time.

It is also said:

Having mounted the horse of a pure human body,
Flee the difficult passage of saṃsāra's suffering.

And further:

Our human body
Should be utilized.

Although a mind-stream in which faith has not arisen may superficially seem to belong to a human being without any deficiencies, it is simply a superficial appearance of [a being endowed with] the leisures and opportunities, like an animal with the face and form of a human. If faith is present in the mind-stream, it does not matter whether the faculties are complete or slightly impaired at the present moment—it is a supreme support.

The *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*[10] says:

Those with little faith who abide in [cyclic] existence
Cannot fathom the awakening of the buddhas.

The sūtras teach:[11]

People without faith
Will not develop positive qualities,
Just as a sprout [will not develop from]
A burnt seed.

The sūtras also state:[12]

Ānanda, you must be endowed with faith—
This is the request of the Tathāgata.

As for faith, the *Compendium of Abhidharma* explains: 6f

What is faith? It is to have full confidence, aspiration, and inspiration regarding karma and its results, the truths, and the [three] jewels.

As is said, there is (1) inspired faith (*dang ba'i dad pa*), (2) confident faith (*yid ches pa'i dad pa*), and (3) aspiring faith (*'dod pa'i dad pa*).

1. [Inspired faith] is based on the [three] jewels as the objects: it is to feel inspired by and have devotion towards the three jewels† and the gurus.

2. [Confident faith] is to have confidence that the result of virtuous karma is the happiness of the desire realm,† that the result of nonvirtuous karma is suffering, and that the result of stable karma† is the happiness of the [two] higher realms.† One has confidence that it is on the basis of karma and mental afflictions† that one achieves, as the result, the defiled five skandhas,† [as taught in] the truth of suffering. In brief, it is to have confidence in karmic causes and results.

3. [Aspiring faith] is to train respectfully in the path so as to attain unsurpassable awakening. The *Precious Garland*[13] says:

Whoever does not neglect the dharma

Through intention, aggression, fear, or delusion
Is said to possess faith
And is a supreme vessel for definite goodness.

Not to give up the dharma due to desire, aggression, ignorance, and so forth is to have faith.

The benefits [of faith] are infinite. They include developing the attitude of a supreme being, [i.e., a bodhisattva],[†] being free
6b from the eight states without leisure, and so forth. If you possess faith, the tathāgatas will appear before you and teach the dharma. The *Lamp of the Jewels Sūtra*[14] teaches:

If there is faith in the victorious ones[†] and the dharma
of the victorious ones,
Faith in the conduct of the sons and daughters of the
victorious ones,[†]
And faith in unsurpassable awakening,
The bodhichitta of great beings will develop.

The *Bodhisattva Section Sūtra* states:

Thus, bodhisattvas who abide in faith are recognized as recipients of the buddhas' teachings by the bhagavat buddhas, who will appear before them and teach the bodhisattva's path.

Now that you have a human body and possess faith, do not waste them in nonvirtuous or neutral activities—you must exert yourself in the practice of virtue. Even though you may not accumulate gross negative karma of body and speech, because you do not suppress mental nonvirtue, it is uncertain where the continuous maturation [of karma will cause] you to be born in the future. It is said:

If you do not engage in virtue
And do accumulate [the karma of] negative actions,
For a billion aeons
You will not even hear the words "happy states."[†]

7a If you fall into the states without leisure, it will be like that. Therefore, you should meditate until a true understanding of and certainty about the difficulties of attaining these leisures and opportunities, the ease of their destruction, and their numerous

benefits arise in your mind-stream.

If you understand the difficulties of attaining the leisures and opportunities, but are not diligent in the practice of virtue, what point is there in having found what is difficult to acquire? It is important that you exert yourself with great diligence in listening, reflecting, and meditating throughout the day and night, as if you were extinguishing a fire in your hair; that you protect the three trainings[†] as you would your eyes; and that you strive to [develop] bodhichitta.[†]

THE MEDITATION TOPIC IN BRIEF

Reflect that because a precious human body with the leisures and opportunities is difficult to attain and easily destroyed, you will, from today onwards, continuously engage in the practice of virtue without wavering.

2. THE MEDITATION ON DEATH AND IMPERMANENCE

Teaching Session 2 and Meditation Session 2

The Teacher said:

Bhikṣhus,[†] everything composite is impermanent.

How is everything impermanent? It is said in the *Collection of Meaningful Expressions:*[15]

The end of all acquisition is dispersal,
The end of building is collapse,
The end of meeting is parting,
And the end of life is death.

It also says:[16] 7b

Alas, everything composite is impermanent.
It has the nature of arising and disintegration.

Since everything composite is impermanent and changing, your life-force is also impermanent. The external world is impermanent and changes at every instant; it changes throughout aeons of formation, abiding, and destruction, [during] the years, months, days, [during the course of] a meal, a morning, an afternoon, [through-

out] a day, a night, and the four seasons. The *Extensive Sport Sūtra*[17] says:

> The three states of [cyclic] existence† are imperma-
> nent, like clouds in the sky.

Sentient beings, who are the inhabitants [of the world], have the nature of change since their three doors† do not remain [static] for even an instant from birth to old age. In particular, the lifespan of those of Jambudvīpa is not definite, since many unexpected circumstances can cause death. The *Collection of Meaningful Expressions*[18] says:

> Some die in the womb,
> Likewise, some at birth,
> Some when they are just crawling,
> Some when they can run,
> Some when they are old, and some when they are
> young,
> And some when they are adults.
> Gradually, [all] depart.

When death comes, none of the prosperity, fame, or powers
8f [gained] in this life is of any use. They cause future troubles; they are futile; and they will create myriad anxieties at the time of death. As is said:[19]

> When the time of death arrives
> Your children will not be a refuge,
> Nor will your father, nor your relatives.
> You will have no refuge.

[FIVE REFLECTIONS ON DEATH]

1. It is certain that you will die.

2. Since death comes without warning, you may die suddenly.

3. You may die without having the opportunity to purify your negative actions.

4. Although you do not wish for it, you may die without having completed your projects.

5. You will die unassisted by any of the possessions, influence, riches, or powers you had in this life.

1. The reason that it is certain you will die is as follows: No matter how many people there have been—your parents, neighbors, countrymen, those living in monasteries or mountain retreats, relatives, close friends, or acquaintances—and despite the fact that, while pursuing their aims for this life, they diligently made many plans to live long, none of them succeeded or achieved that. The only thing that is said of them is, "He died, she died." There is not one sentient being who has lived, is alive, or who will be born that will remain alive without dying. If even the vajra-nature body of the perfect Buddha perished, what need is there to mention our [own
bodies]? Concerning this, the master Ashvaghoṣha said: 8b

> It is doubtful that you will ever
> See or hear of anyone
> On the earth or in the higher states
> Who, once born, does not die.

He also commented:

> If the buddhas' bodies—
> Vajra bodies
> Adorned with the major and minor marks—are im-
> permanent,
> What need is there to mention others, whose bodies
> Are like the hollow plantain tree?

There are infinite such sayings.

2. You may die suddenly, and death comes without warning. As is said in the *Treasury of Abhidharma:*[20]

> Here [in Jambudvīpa the human lifespan] is uncer-
> tain: at the end
> It is ten years, [although] at first it was countless.

The lifespan of those of us who live in Jambudvīpa is not definite; nowadays we are decrepit at fifty. It is also uncertain because, due to unexpected circumstances, such as poisons or strokes, your dead corpse may be seen tomorrow in the place where you have slept,

alive, tonight. Since death gradually comes closer as the years, months, and days pass, it will arrive without you even being aware of it. You may die suddenly, as an arrow is shot by an expert archer, as water falls from a mountain cliff, or as a prisoner is led to the place of execution.[21] As is said:

> For example, the arrow that an expert archer
> Draws on a bowstring and releases
> Races towards its target[22] without standing still;
> 9a Human life is like that.

The *Crest-Ornament of the Precious Assembly*[23] states:

> Friends, this life passes quickly,
> As swiftly as water [falls from] a mountain cliff.
> Immature beings, not recognizing this,
> Are unskillful and proudly intoxicated with pleasures.

The *Noble Tree Sūtra*[24] says:

> Like a prisoner being led to the place of execution,
> With each step taken, death [comes] closer.

And in the *Collection of Meaningful Expressions*[25] it says:

> For example, those certain to be executed
> Approach[26] their execution
> With each and every step they take;
> The life-force of all humans is like this.

3. You may die without having the chance to purify your negative actions because your lifespan is uncertain, the circumstances [that can lead to] death are numerous, and the circumstances [that support] life are few. Even the circumstances [that support] life can become circumstances [that lead to] death. As it says in the *Friendly Letter*:[27]

> This life is endangered by numerous things, like something blown by the wind.
> It is more impermanent than even a bubble of water.
> That the breath is inhaled and exhaled and
> That one wakes up from sleep are marvelous things.

The *Precious Garland*[28] observes:

> The circumstances [conducive to] death are many.
> Those [that support] life are not—
> And even they [can cause] death.
> Therefore always engage in the dharma.

Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva[29] says:

> I may die
> Before my negative actions have been purified. 9b

It continues:[30]

> It does not make sense to be happy,
> Saying, "At least I will not die today."
> Unquestionably, there will come
> A time when I do not exist.

4. While you are thinking that you must gradually finish your dharma and worldly projects that you have not done, that are not completed, and that are still left, death will arrive unwanted. Therefore, you should not try to accomplish the aims of this life, but should accomplish the aims for your next life. It is said:

> It is not certain which will come first,
> Tomorrow or the next world.
> Thus, it makes sense not to apply yourself to the concerns of tomorrow,
> But to the aims for your next life.

And *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*[31] says:

> Without pause by day or night,
> This life is constantly slipping by.
> Once in decline, it will not return.
> Why will one like me not die?

5. No matter how much bravery and skill, forcefulness and speed, eloquence and influence you may have, and no matter how many possessions, riches, or powers you may have accumulated, none of these things will be able to prevent your

death. At death you will leave everything behind except the effects of your previous karma. Like a hair pulled from [a pat of] butter, you will go naked and empty-handed. Now you cannot bear sickness, cannot bear hunger, cannot bear cold,
10f and cannot bear thirst. You are afraid of being beaten, afraid of being killed, afraid of being bound, and afraid of being caught. You experience numerous difficulties and sufferings simply to protect your life.

When you die, everyone will regard you as disgusting, turn their backs on you, and grab your possessions. Your body will be tied up, carried to the charnel grounds, and eaten by birds and carnivores so that not even a trace will remain besides its bones. Or it may be burned in a fire, [leaving behind] just a handful of ashes. Or it may be thrown in a river to be eaten by fishes and frogs. Or it may be buried in the dirt of the earth to pulsate with maggots.

Because you cannot transcend this situation, there will be no refuge or escort at that time [of death] other than your virtuous karma and the three jewels. It is important to make the necessary preparations, so that your mind will be at ease and free from any remorse. It is said in *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva:*[32]

> While I am in bed
> Surrounded by relatives and friends,
> Only I will experience
> The feeling of life being severed.
>
> When I am seized by the messengers of Yama,†
> What use are relatives? What use are friends?[33]
> At that moment merit alone can protect me—
> But I have not attended to that.

It is also said:

> Your body, which you have nourished with food and clothing,
> 10b Acquired through great difficulties,
> Will not assist you—it will be devoured by birds or dogs,
> Or be burnt in a fiery blaze,
> Or will rot in water,
> Or be buried in the ground.

[DEATH AND IMPERMANENCE: FURTHER REFLECTIONS]

Teaching Session 3 and Meditation Session 3

The actual manner of death can be sudden, as in the case of death by fire, water, poison, strokes, [the blows of] weapons, and so forth. However, those [who suffer from] lengthy illnesses, who have not been helped by religious ceremonies or medical treatments, will be oppressed by overwhelming physical and mental suffering [at death]. They will lose the strength to speak. Although food would help, they will be unable to get it into their mouths. Even though they will be thirsty and want to drink, their doctor will forbid such things. They will gasp for breath. They will be unable to sleep at night and [will pass] the day helplessly in a daze. They will sleep for the last time in their beds, eat their last meals, and hold their last conversations. Sweat will form on their faces, they will clutch at their clothing. They will think they are sinking below the earth. Their breath will go out their mouths and not return. Their eyes will roll back and they will die. Their bodies will be carried to the cemetery and their minds, which will have separated from their bodies, will roam helplessly in the bardo† following their accumulated karma. Through the force of their karma, they will take their next place of birth. This is described in the sūtras:

> This world will be cast aside. You will go on to the 11f
> next world. You will make the great relocation. You will enter great darkness. You will be surrounded by your parents, brothers, sisters, and children. Your breath will cease. They will say, "Let's divide the wealth." There will be the cries of, "Oh my father! Oh my mother! Oh my child!" They will loosen their hair [as a sign of mourning]. At that time, there is no refuge, resting place, or last resort other than the dharma. At that time, the dharma is your island, protector, resting place, and teacher.

Previous superior beings were motivated by [reflecting on] impermanence. They abandoned concerns for this life and took practice

to heart, thereby perfecting the two benefits.[†] Numerous scholars and siddhas[†]—Atīsha, the great translator Rinchen Zangpo, Chagtri Chog, Ame Changchup Sherab Dorje, Dzing-gom Wangchuk Gyaltsen, Potowa, Kharakpa, and others—were motivated by [reflecting on] impermanence and practiced [the dharma] without delay, thus achieving siddhi.[†] We, however, have adequate food and clothing, but are unsatisfied; we want more. We have sufficient wealth for our needs, but are unsatisfied; we want something more enduring. And yet, it does appear that come what may, death
11b will pierce us to the heart. It is important that we develop a realistic frame of mind, consider what should be done, and train [according to] the examples of previous gurus.

A spiritual mentor who teaches just one word of dharma is a better friend than even a chakravartin.[†] An earth-and-stone hut isolated from the nonvirtuous activities of the three doors is a better residence than a palace and gardens decorated with the seven types of precious jewels. To have few desires and to be content is a greater fortune than all the wealth you could amass. To apply this in practice is the important thing.

Reflect on the uncertainty of the time of death and shorten your perspective.[a] Become weary [of saṃsāra]. Resolving that there is no time to spare, devote your time, day and night, to dharma practice. Until your perspective has really become shortened and your mind is free from needs, it is important to meditate on death and impermanence. If an understanding of and certainty about death and impermanence do not arise in your mind-stream, a state free from needs will not arise. Without that, you will end up being lazy with no diligence for dharma practice. Whether your dharma practice develops or not depends on this.

THE MEDITATION TOPIC IN BRIEF

There is no end to birth other than death. Moreover, think that the time of death is uncertain and that nothing but the dharma is of any use at the time of death.[34] From time to time, remember

a. Shorten your perspective (*blo sna thung*): An expression that has the sense of not wasting time as well as not making long term plans. It could also be translated as "do not procrastinate" or "curtail your planning." (DPR and ATGN)

that when you are afflicted by illness, your dead body will be carried to a cemetery and become a skeleton. Your consciousness will 12a
drift helplessly, like a feather in the wind. Feel weariness [for saṃsāra] and really shorten your perspective without wasting time.

3. THE REFLECTION ON KARMIC CAUSES AND RESULTS

Teaching Session 4 and Meditation Session 4

Next, consider karmic causes and results. In general, happiness and suffering manifest due to karma. This is stated in the *Sūtra of One Hundred Karmas*:[35]

> The variety of karma
> Has created the variety of beings.

The *White Lotus of Compassion Sūtra* states:

> The world is created by karma and manifests due to karma. Sentient beings are created by their karma, appear due to the causes of their karma, and are distinguished by their karma.

And the *Treasury of Abhidharma*[36] says:

> The myriad worlds arise from karma.

Karma is classified either as the karma of intention (*sems pa'i las*) or karma due to intention (*bsam pa'i las*). Both kinds are also included within the karma of body, speech, or mind, as is said:[37]

> That [i.e., karma] is intention and what is created by that.
> Intention is the karma of the mind,
> Which produces physical and verbal karma.

All the happiness and suffering that appears in this life is the result of whatever virtuous or nonvirtuous actions were done in previous lives. The fully matured result (*rnam smin gyi 'bras bu*) of the karma
one creates now [will be experienced in] the next life. [For exam- 12b
ple,] the fully matured result of nonvirtuous actions will be birth in the three lower states.

The result corresponding to the cause (*rgyu mthun gyi 'bras bu*)

is expressed in the following quotation:[38]

> Having killed, one's life will be short.
> Having injured [others], one will be greatly harmed.
> Having stolen, one will be materially impoverished.
> Having committed adultery, one will be [plagued by] adversaries.
>
> Having lied, one will be disparaged.
> Having used divisive speech, one will be separated from one's friends.
> Having used harsh language, one will hear unpleasant talk.
> Having spoken meaninglessly, one's words will not be honored.
>
> Covetousness will destroy one's hopes.
> Malice will create fears.
> Wrong views [lead to] negative views.

As for the dominant result (*dbang gi 'bras bu*), it is said:

> Externally, there will be little affluence and many dangers,
> Swirling dust, smells, and [extreme] highs and lows [in the terrain],
> Salt plains and erratic [seasons],
> And harvests will be minimal or nonexistent.

Those are the results of engaging in the ten nonvirtuous actions.† If one engages in the ten virtuous actions,† one will attain a body in the higher states endowed with happiness, and be born in a pleasant land.

Having accumulated karma that involves a greater, intermediate, or lesser degree of nonvirtue, together with having been motivated by aggression, desire, or stupidity, one will be born either in the hell, hungry ghost, or animal states. Having engaged in a lesser degree of virtue, one will be born as a human; through a middling
13a degree, as a desire realm god and so forth; and through a greater
degree, in the concentrations† [of the form realm] and in the formless realm.

The *Precious Garland*[39] states:

> Desire, aggression, stupidity,
> And the karma they generate are nonvirtuous.
> From nonvirtue, suffering
> And all lower states† [arise].
>
> The lack of desire, aggression, or stupidity,
> And the karma they generate is virtuous.
> From virtue, all happy states
> And happiness[40] in all lifetimes [arise].

It also says:[41]

> Desire causes one to become a hungry ghost;
> Aggression sends one to the hells;
> And delusion causes one to become an animal.

It is said in the *Shorter Close Placement of Mindfulness*:[42]

> From virtue, happiness is attained.
> From nonvirtue, suffering arises.
> In this way, virtuous and nonvirtuous
> Karma and its results are clearly taught.

The *Precious Garland*[43] also says:

> It is through the concentrations, the immeasurables, and the formless [realm]
> That the happiness of the Brahmā [realm] and the others is attained.

You should abandon nonvirtuous actions (the three nonvirtuous actions of body, the four of speech, and the three of mind) and exert yourself in practicing their opposites: the ten virtuous actions. It is said in the *Sūtra of One Hundred Karmas*:

> The karma of corporeal beings
> Will not be exhausted even [after] a hundred aeons.
> When [the conditions] gather and the time comes 13b
> It will mature into results.

Whatever is done—be it virtuous or nonvirtuous—is placed as

seeds in the mind. Whenever the conditions for these to awaken are met, their maturation will manifest unfailingly as happiness or suffering respectively. If you are motivated by the mental afflictions, no matter what superficial virtue you may engage in (such as guarding ethical conduct, or listening, reflecting, and meditating), all of it is a facade of dharma, and therefore will not become the true dharma.

The results of your karma will be experienced only by you; they will not be shared with others. Except for the case of using remedies to destroy the seeds [of karmic results, karmic seeds] may lie dormant for infinite aeons without being exhausted. Their respective results will manifest without fail. This is stated in the sūtras:

> The karma done by Devadatta will not mature in the ground, or the water, or any such [place]. It will mature solely in the skandhas and āyatanas† of the one who committed it.[44] For whom else would it mature?

The *Compendium of Abhidharma* says:

> How do we experience our karmic lot? We experience the maturation of what we have done: we experience specific virtuous or nonvirtuous karma.

14f The *Questions of Surata Sūtra*[45] states:

> Hot seeds
> Will produce hot fruits.
> Sweet seeds
> Will produce sweet fruits.
> Taking these as examples,
> The wise will know
> That the maturation of negative actions is hot
> And the maturation of what is positive is sweet.

The *Shorter Close Placement of Mindfulness* observes:

> Fire might turn cold,
> The wind might be caught with a lasso,
> The sun and moon might fall to the ground,
> [But] the maturation of karma is unfailing.

[CLASSIFICATIONS OF KARMA]

Teaching Session 5 and Meditation Session 5

[MATURATION]

In general, there are four types of karma: that which is experienced in this life; that which will be experienced in the next life; that which is experienced at another time; and that whose experience is uncertain.

An example of the first type is karma whose result matures in this life because it is based on a distinctive object or intention.[a] The second type is the five acts of immediate consequence† and the five secondary acts of immediate consequence† whose results occur in the next life. The third is explained the *Sūtra of One Hundred Karmas:*

> The karma of corporeal beings
> Will not be exhausted even [after] a hundred aeons.
> When [the conditions] gather and the time comes
> It will mature into results.

An example of the fourth type is the karma [present] in the mindstream of an arhat.†[b] 14b

[THREEFOLD CLASSIFICATION]

A threefold classification is: meritorious karma, unmeritorious karma, and stable karma. The first is the virtuous karma of the desire realm. The second is nonvirtuous karma. The third is the virtuous karma of the two higher realms.

[FOURFOLD CLASSIFICATION]

The fourfold classification is: only positive karma, only negative karma, mixed karma, and karma that exhausts the maturation [of karma]. The first is the virtuous karma of the [two] higher realms.

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a. Distinctive object or intention (*zhing bsam gyi khyad pa*): A "distinctive object" would be the Buddha. A "distinctive intention" is one involving a very strong emotion or thought. (ASG)

b. Arhats are not free from subtle karma. (ASG)

The second is the nonvirtuous karma of the desire realm. The third is the virtuous karma of the desire realm. The fourth is undefiled karma. Their maturation will bring about pleasant, unpleasant, or mixed [results, respectively]. Undefiled karma exhausts previous karma.

[INTENTION AND ACTION]

The four combinations are: a positive intention and a negative action, and so forth. An example of the first, [a positive intention and negative action, is found in the story of the Buddha, who, as] a captain, compassionately killed a deceptive merchant.[a] The second [combination, a negative intention and positive action,] includes being generous in order to commit murder. An example of the third [combination, a positive intention and positive action,] is to be generous with a pure intention. An example of the fourth [combination, a negative intention and negative action,] is to take life in order to eat meat.

[RESULTANT EXPERIENCES]

There are three forms of karma: that which produces happy experiences, that which produces sad experiences, and that which produces experiences of equanimity. The first is the virtuous karma of the desire realm through the third concentration [of the form
15f realm]. The second is the virtuous karma of the desire realm. The third is the virtuous karma of the fourth concentration and above.

[IMPETUS AND COMPLETION]

There are also four combinations in terms of impetus and completion.[b] The first, when both aspects are virtuous, [produces] the

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a. This refers to a well-known story of Buddha as a bodhisattva. He was the captain of a ship on which 500 jewel merchants were making a journey. One of the merchants planned to kill the others, but the Buddha, knowing this, killed him instead, thus saving the lives of the other merchants and preventing the one from committing the very negative action of killing 500 people. (ATGN)

b. Impetus and completion (*'phen rdzogs*): "Impetus" is an

happiness of the beings in higher states. The second combination, [when both aspects are negative, causes] the suffering of the beings in the lower states. The third, when the impetus is virtuous and the completion is negative, [will produce] the suffering of beings in the higher states. The fourth, [when the impetus is negative and the completion is positive, creates], for instance, the happiness of beings in the lower states.

[THREEFOLD CLASSIFICATION]

Another threefold classification is: virtuous karma, nonvirtuous karma, and neutral karma. The first, virtuous karma, is divided into defiled and undefiled virtuous karma. The first, [defiled virtuous karma], is the tenfold path of virtuous karma (not killing and the others). An example of the second, [undefiled virtuous karma], is liberation† or nirvāṇa.† Nonvirtuous karma is the tenfold path of nonvirtuous actions.

Neutral karma is either neutral karma with obscurations or neutral karma without obscurations. Neutral karma with obscurations is, for instance, the karma involving the mental afflictions of the [two] higher realms. Neutral karma without obscurations is the karma of arts and crafts, for example. The distinction between whether a neutral act is obscured or not is determined by whether the mental afflictions are involved or not. There are four types of neutral karma without obscuration:† what arises from [karmic]
maturation, activities, arts and crafts, and intentional emanations. 15b

[COMMON AND NOT COMMON]

Karma can also be divided into two categories: common (*thun mong*) and not common (*thun mong ma yin pa*). The first refers, for

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b. (continued from previous page) action done in a former life. "Completion" is whatever is done with the results of former actions. An example where both are positive is the case of a wealthy person who is very generous. Such a person is wealthy in the present life due to having performed acts of generosity as the "impetus" in a past life. Being generous in the present life is the virtuous "completion." A case where the impetus is positive and the completion is negative is a powerful leader who causes great suffering for others. (ASG)

example, to the karma that produces the world, which is the environment. The second refers, for instance, to the karma that creates sentient beings, who are the inhabitants.

You should practice according to the extensive [presentations] of these topics and the lucid words found in the *Treasury of Abhidharma*'s section presenting karma, the *Sūtra of One Hundred Karmas*, the *Precious Garland*, and other such texts.

Do not be confused about adopting virtue and rejecting nonvirtue and do not let your body, speech, and mind simply remain in a neutral state. Exert yourself in the practice of virtue and constantly examine your three doors. Take delight in all that is virtuous; do not waste [any of it]. Confess all negative actions through the four powers and refrain [from repeating such actions]. In the same way that a small spark has the potential to burn an entire forest, virtue has the potential to destroy a mass of negative karma. Therefore you should engage [in virtue] enthusiastically. It is said in the *Collection of Meaningful Expressions*:[46]

> Even small merit done
> Brings great happiness in the next world.
> It becomes very meaningful,
> Like grains ripening into an abundance.

16f The abandonment of even the smallest negative action, the performance of even the smallest virtue, and exertion in meditation on love, compassion, and bodhichitta will accomplish the point of the Buddha's teachings. As is said:

> Do not commit any negative actions at all.
> Practice virtue extensively.
> Completely discipline your own mind.
> These are the teachings of the Buddha.

THE MEDITATION TOPIC IN BRIEF

If you have control over your rebirth following your death, that is sufficient. However, since your next birth depends on the karma you have accrued, think that you will practice without being confused about the proper way to adopt and reject karmic causes and results. Examine your mind-stream and be diligent in abandoning negative actions and practicing virtue.

4. THE MEDITATION ON THE FAULTS OF SAṂSĀRA

Teaching Session 6 and Meditation Session 6

Next, meditate on the faults of saṃsāra. Throughout beginningless time, on the basis of ignorance as the cause—which is to take what is not a self or an "I" to be a self—the delusion of saṃsāra has manifested and you have been tormented unceasingly by the three sufferings.

The suffering of conditioned existence (*'du byed kyi sdug bsngal*) has an indifferent feeling. The suffering of change (*'gyur ba'i sdug bsngal*) is [based on] feelings of happiness. The suffering of 16b suffering (*sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsngal*) has a manifest feeling of suffering. These are illustrated by the examples of, respectively, arranging a bed of hot coals, someone sleeping on a grass mat on top of those, and the pain that person experiences when [the coals] blaze up from a blowing wind.

THE SUFFERING OF CONDITIONED EXISTENCE

The suffering of conditioned existence pervades [all the realms] from the Pinnacle of Existence† to the Most Torturous.† Even beings without forms or discriminations will fall [to the lower states] when the force of their karma has been exhausted. Once the perpetuating skandhas† (*nyer len gyi phung po*) have been adopted, there is suffering. While this is not seen by ordinary beings, it is seen correctly by noble beings.† To illustrate this: if one puts a single hair on the palm of one's hand, there will be no discomfort, but if one puts it in one's eye, there will be. It is said in the *Commentary on the "Treasury of Abhidharma"*:[47]

> A single hair lying on the palm of the hand
> Causes discomfort and suffering
> If it gets into the eye.
> Immature beings are like the palm of the hand:
> They do not recognize the hair of the suffering of conditioned existence.
> Noble ones are like the eye:
> They see that what is conditioned is suffering.

THE SUFFERING OF CHANGE

The suffering of change involves experiencing the taste of the 17f

sense pleasures (forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects) with craving and attachment. Like the pleasure [that may be had from] the arrows and the female messengers of Māra,† honey on a knife blade, salt water, or an itching sensation,[48] the end of all pleasures is unlimited suffering. Since all happiness in saṃsāra ultimately changes and brings suffering, it does not transcend suffering. Even though you may attain the state of those most renowned in the world—chakravartins, Indra, Brahmā, and the like—that too will ultimately change into suffering. This is stated in the *Friendly Letter*:

> Even though one has become a chakravartin,
> One will at some point become a servant in saṃsāra.
>
> Even though one has become the worthy Indra,
> One will fall to earth again through the force of one's karma.
>
> Even though one has attained the state of Brahmā, with his happiness and freedom from attachment,
> One will have to endure the uninterrupted suffering
> Of being fuel for the fires of Most Torturous.

On the basis of not seeing such [states] as suffering and taking them to be happiness, you do not abandon your attachments and aversions to the eight worldly qualities† (*'jig rten gyi chos brgyad*), and you separate yourself from the good fortune [of being able to
17b practice] the genuine dharma. Therefore, you should be able to bear such adversities as [bad] food and [poor] clothing or even a single unpleasant word; it is important to cut as many of your ties with saṃsāra as possible.

THE SUFFERING OF SUFFERING

There is much suffering of suffering in each of the six classes of beings.

[Hell Beings]

[THE EIGHT HOT HELLS] Those who [have committed] the most negative of actions experience suffering by being born in the hells. Twenty thousand yojanas† below this continent on a ground of blazing, burning iron, suffering falls on [the bodies of the hell beings there, which are] produced by negative actions, have the soft skin of a new-born baby, and are many yojanas [in size].

There are eight hot hells: Reviving, Black Line, Gathering and Crushing, Wailing, Loud Wailing, Hot, Extremely Hot, and Most Torturous. In the each of the four cardinal directions there are the following neighboring hells: Pit of Burning Coals, Swamp of Putrid Corpses, Grove of Razors, Forest of Swordlike Leaves, Trees with Knifelike Leaves, and the Fordless River of Hot Ashes. It is said in the *Treasury of Abhidharma*:[49]

> Twenty thousand [yojanas] below here
> Is Most Torturous.
> Above that are seven [other] hells.
>
> In addition to the eight, there are sixteen [others]:
> On the four sides are
> Burning Coals, Putrid Corpses,
> The Road of Razors and so forth, and the River.
>
> There are also eight cold [hells], such as Blisters.

[THE EIGHT COLD HELLS] Below this continent, on the shore of a 18f
great ocean, in a frozen enclosure of total darkness [filled with] a swirling blizzard, there are eight hells: Blisters, Bursting Blisters, Exclaiming "A-chu," Exclaiming "Kyi-hu," Chattering Teeth, Split like an Utpāla, Split like a Lotus, and Huge Splits like a Lotus.

The occasional hells do not have [one] fixed location and the experience of suffering there is also varied.

In all these hells there is no chance for a single instant of happiness; the only experience is one of suffering. As for the suffering: the piercing of a human body with three hundred weapons does not create even a fraction of the suffering [experienced] in the hells.

The lifespan of beings in the hot hells is as follows: One day in [the god realm of] the Four Great Royal Lineages† is equivalent to fifty human years; and these [gods] live five hundred of their own years. One day in the Reviving hell is equivalent to the lifespan in the Four Great Royal Lineages; and they [i.e., the Reviving hell

beings] live for five hundred of their own years. One day in [the god realm of] Controlling Others' Emanations† is equivalent to six hundred thousand human years; and these [gods] live for six million of their own years. One day in the Hot hell is equivalent to the
18b lifespan in Controlling Others' Emanations; and they [i.e., the Hot hell beings] live for six million of their own years. [The lifespan in] the Extremely Hot hell is half an intermediate aeon. In the Most Torturous hell the experience of suffering that is difficult to bear lasts one intermediate aeon.

The lifespan of those in the cold hell of Blisters is exhausted when a storehouse filled with eighty bushels of sesame seeds, from which one seed is removed every hundred years, is emptied. [The lifespans of] the others are increased by factors of twenty. This is explained in the *Treasury of Abhidharma*[50] where it clearly summarizes:

> In the [first] six, Reviving and the others,
> One day is equivalent to the lifespans of the desire realm gods, sequentially.
> Their lifespans
> Are related to the desire gods.
> Extremely Hot [lasts for] half [an aeon] and Most Torturous
> [Lasts] an intermediate aeon.

It also says:[51]

> The [time spent] emptying a store of sesame seeds,
> By removing one seed every hundred years,
> Is the lifespan of the Blisters [hell].
> The others are increased by factors of twenty.

[Hungry Ghosts]

As for the location of the hungry ghost state: five hundred yojanas below this [earth] is the world of Yama, whose emanations pervade the human world and the sky.

As for their particular sufferings: Those with external obstructions regard whatever they see as weapons or as pus and blood and thus are unable to eat. For those with internal obstructions, food
19a and drink cannot pass their throats. For those with obstructions to

food and drink, whatever they eat [becomes] a fiery blaze. They all [experience] immeasurable suffering. As for their lifespan: one of their days is equivalent to a human month and they live for five hundred of their own years. As is said:[52]

> Hungry ghosts [live for] five hundred [years], with their day [being equivalent to a human] month.

[Animals]

The animal [realm] does not have a [single] fixed location. The largest [animals are as big as] Mount Meru and the smallest are [the size of] the tip of a hair. They suffer from eating one another, being enslaved, being slaughtered, being used to plow or carry loads, being prodded with sticks, and so forth. Nāgas suffer from rains of hot sand that separate their flesh and bones. Their lifespan is unpredictable: [some animals live for just] an instant and some nāgas can live for an aeon. As is said:[53]

> Animals [live for] an aeon at most.

[THE FAULTS OF SAṂSĀRA: THE SUFFERINGS OF THE HIGHER STATES]

Teaching Session 7 and Meditation Session 7

[THE SUFFERING OF SUFFERING CONTINUED]

[Humans]

In the happy states, we humans [experience] the four sufferings of birth, aging, sickness, and death. We have also previously experienced, and even now continue to experience, being separated from what is pleasant, meeting with what is unpleasant, meeting with our hated enemies, being separated from our loving friends, having difficulty protecting what we have, and being unable—despite our efforts—to acquire what we do not have.

[Demigods]

The demigods [experience] the sufferings of being killed or impaled during war and so forth.

[Gods]

19b [DESIRE REALM GODS] Even the lifespans of the desire [realm] gods come to an end, [but] because they are attached to and intoxicated by sense pleasures they are unaware of this [until] the five signs of death appear: their flower garlands are seen to wilt; they are dissatisfied with where they sit; the god-children reject them; their bodies smell bad; and, knowing that they will fall from their pleasurable place to a lower realm, they feel afraid, anxious, nauseous, and helpless. This [causes] a mental suffering that is a hundred thousand times worse than the suffering in the hells.

[FORM AND FORMLESS REALM GODS] Since those in the four concentrations† [of the form realm] and in the four spheres of the formless realm† have not rid themselves of the suffering of conditioned existence, the obscuration of mental afflictions is present in a latent form. Because they have no wish for liberation, they are intoxicated by their samādhi. Although they have no suffering for the time being, they have no control over birth or death; so, when the fruits of their previous virtues are consumed and they have to leave that place, they will be born in the lower states and will again experience suffering.

[SUMMARY]

As is said:

> Hell beings are afflicted by the fires of hell;
> Hungry ghosts are afflicted by hunger and thirst;
> Animals are afflicted by eating each other;
> Humans are afflicted by not having enough to live on;
> Gods are afflicted by carelessness.
> In saṃsāra there is never even
> A needle tip's worth of happiness.

20a The *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*[54] states:

> When the faults of saṃsāra are seen,
> Great sadness will arise.
> Fear of the three realms† as a prison
> Will provoke one's determination to abandon them.

Nāgārjuna commented:

> Since saṃsāra is like that,
> There is not an excellent birth anywhere among
> The gods, humans, hells, hungry ghosts, or animals.
> Know that they are vessels of much harm.

Cultivate a feeling of renunciation for the faults of saṃsāra: the activities of this life, the sufferings, busyness, and distractions of your home. Desiring to be liberated from all of that, you should flee quickly, in a state of panic, like an animal in a burning forest. Cut through any longings and flee, like a bird [escapes from] a freezing lake. Cut through any attachments and flee in dread, like a captain freed from an island of cannibals. Flee to the other side of saṃsāra without sullying the three vows† with faults, just as you would preserve the life-raft that will carry you across a river. Prepare the two accumulations† and the wealth of virtue and flee saṃsāra with joy, just as a merchant prepares for a journey.

One not [fleeing saṃsāra] will be like an animal burned in a 20b
fire, a bird stuck frozen in a lake, a captain eaten by cannibals, a person with a life-raft drowning in a river, and a merchant returning with nothing; one will be burned by saṃsāra's fire, be caught in the frozen enclosure of one's home, be eaten by the cannibals of this life, will fall into the river of the lower states, and will return from the leisures and opportunities [of the human life] with nothing.

Cast aside concerns for worldly activities, give up attachments to the sense pleasures, banish the eight worldly qualities, take death to heart, and see saṃsāra as suffering. Since the pacification of [cyclic] existence, which is the attainment of a shrāvaka or pratyekabuddha,† will not benefit all mother sentient beings,† you should generate a pure intention: think that for the welfare of all your mother sentient beings, whose numbers are as vast as the extent of space, you will, by all means, attain the state of unsurpassable, true, complete awakening. Recollecting the benefits [of such an attitude]—by thinking that if you possess bodhichitta you will be able to manifest unsurpassable awakening without delay—guard it without ever impairing it and apply yourself with determination.

This has been a slightly extensive [presentation].

THE MEDITATION TOPIC IN BRIEF

Since saṃsāra—from the Pinnacle of Existence down to the Most
21f Torturous—does not transcend the nature of suffering, regard all
saṃsāric places, friends, enjoyments, and fame like the feast [provided by] an executioner who will lead you to the place of execution. Regarding saṃsāra as a pit of fire or a dungeon cell, give rise to a mind free from need, and cut your ties to saṃsāra. Develop a strong intention, thinking, "I will, by all means, achieve liberation and omniscience."†

These are called "the practices of the four common preliminaries."

If the extensive [presentation] is condensed into four sessions, [this would be] the fourth [session].

THE FOUR UNCOMMON PRELIMINARIES

B. THE FOUR UNCOMMON PRELIMINARIES

This has four parts:

1. Refuge and Bodhichitta
2. Vajrasattva Meditation
3. Maṇḍala Offering
4. Guru Yoga

1. THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING REFUGE AND DEVELOPING BODHICHITTA, WHICH ENABLE ONE TO BECOME A WORTHY RECIPIENT OR CAUSE ALL ONE'S ACTIONS TO BECOME THE PATH TO LIBERATION

Teaching Session 8 and Meditation Session 8

You may wonder, "Are powerful worldly beings, such as Brahmā,
Vishnu, or others, my parents or relatives, sources of refuge?" To
be able to provide refuge, one must be liberated from fear and be
free from suffering oneself. Those who are not like that are not a 21b
refuge.

Thus the temporary refuge is the three jewels. Ultimately, the final refuge is the Buddha alone, within whom all three are complete. The *Highest Continuum*[55] states:

> Ultimately, the refuge for beings
> Is the Buddha alone,

> Because the Sage possesses the dharmakāya,† and
> Because he is what is ultimate for the saṅgha as well.

It is said in the *Questions of Sāgaramati Sūtra*:[56]

> There is no teacher like the Buddha.
> There is no refuge like the genuine dharma.
> There is no supreme group like the saṅgha.

And the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*[57] says:

> Those who take refuge in the three jewels
> Will attain fearlessness.

REASONS FOR TAKING REFUGE

There is no one, other than the Buddha, who is free from all suffering and who is the final refuge for those who [wish to] achieve liberation and omniscience. There is no path, other than the dharma, for achieving buddhahood. There are no friends, other than the saṅgha, who practice the dharma. Therefore, there is no way to achieve awakening without relying on the three jewels. Since there are numerous drawbacks [to not taking refuge]—such as not being considered a Buddhist and the arising of hindrances and obstacles to the practice of the genuine dharma—as well as virtues [in taking refuge], it is important to take refuge.
22a

ITS BENEFITS AND FUNCTIONS

You become a Buddhist; [refuge] acts as the basis for all the vows; it exhausts all previous negative actions; you are protected from the harm [created by] humans and nonhumans. You will achieve everything you desire and attain great merit. You will not fall into the lower states and you will swiftly become fully and completely awakened. As for being protected from harm and other things, it says in the *Ornament for the Sūtras*:[58]

> Because it protects from all harm,
> From the lower states, from unskillful methods,
> From [the views of] the transitory collection,† and from the Hīnayāna,
> It is asserted to be the genuine refuge.

You should train in the general precepts,† the particular precepts,† and the [figuratively] concordant precepts† [of refuge]; and you should give up all the factors to be abandoned. Do not be confused about what is to be adopted and what is to be rejected.

VISUALIZATION OF THE REFUGE TREE

You should take refuge with a recognition of its numerous benefits and the defects [of not doing so]. *To do this, visualize the sources* of refuge as follows: In front of you there is a wish-fulfilling tree, with a single main trunk and with its peak, branches, and leaves *filling the expanse of the sky. Its five branches stretch out in the* 22b
four directions.[a] On the central [branch], on the pistils [of a lotus] is a precious throne upheld by eight lions. On top of that a PAṂ [syllable] changes into a lotus, an A into a moon disk, and a RAṂ into a sun disk. On this seat is your kind root guru, who is the embodiment of the buddhas of the three times, in whom you will place your hopes, upon whom you will rely in future lives, and from whom you receive empowerments and instructions in this life. He or she may be visualized in his or her own form or as Vajradhara, the all-pervasive lord. Vajradhara is blue, like a clear sapphire, with one face and two arms. His legs are in the vajra position† and he is adorned with silks, precious jewels, and bone ornaments. He holds a vajra and bell crossed at his heart. His lustrous form is adorned with the major and minor marks. *Smiling slightly with a* pleased expression, he blazes with majesty.

Visualize, above his head, the Kagyü gurus, arranged one above the other; the gurus of the practice lineages, gathered like clouds; and the ḍākas and ḍākinīs, [filling] the spaces in between like fog. Around the edge of his throne are the dharma protectors and guardians† who, because they remove adverse circumstances and obstacles to your dharma practice, face outwards and are 23a
wrathful.

Visualize on the front branch a throne, as before, with lotus, sun, and corpse seats. On that sits whichever yidam you prefer—such as Vajrayoginī, Guhyasamāja for the father tantras, Mahāmāyā for the mother tantras, Hevajra as the essence, or

---

a. Five branches stretch out in the four directions: In fact, the fifth or central branch extends straight up. (LTD)

Kālachakra for the nondual [tantras]—surrounded by the assemblies of deities of the four classes of tantras.†

Visualize on the branch to the right [of Vajradhara] and on the other [branches], thrones and seats as just described (but without the corpse). Seated [to the right] is the bhagavat Shākyamuni, surrounded by the buddhas of the three times and ten directions, such as the one thousand and two buddhas of this excellent aeon.

Visualize on the branch to the rear [of Vajradhara] the jewel of the Mahāyāna dharma in the form of the texts or volumes, which are like [a mountain of] stratified rocks, have golden front flaps, are shining and brilliant, and face you.

Visualize on the branch to the left [of Vajradhara] the noble saṅgha: the bodhisattva saṅgha (such as the eight close sons)† and the shrāvaka saṅgha (such as Ānanda, Kāshyapa, and the supreme pair†), who are wearing saffron robes, have shaven heads, and are barefoot.

23b Visualize [filling] the spaces between [the branches] ḍākas, ḍākinīs, dharma protectors, and guardians, like fog and swirling snow.

Visualize in the meadow around the tree yourself and all sentient beings, whose numbers are as vast as the extent of space, [including] your hated enemies, all harmful obstructing spirits, as well as all your friends, all gathered together in a crowd. Thinking that they follow your actions and that the sound of the refuge prayer resounds, recite:

> I and all sentient beings, whose numbers are as vast as the extent of space, beginning with my kind parents, take refuge in the kind, glorious, and genuine root and lineage gurus, who are the essence of the body, speech, mind, excellent qualities, and activity of the tathāgatas of the ten directions and three times, who are the source of the eighty-four thousand collections of the dharma, and who are lords of the noble saṅgha.
>
> We take refuge in the assembly of deities of the yidam maṇḍalas. We take refuge in the bhagavat bud-
> 24f dhas. We take refuge in the genuine dharma. We take refuge in the noble saṅgha. We take refuge in the assembly of ḍākas, ḍākinīs, dharma protectors, and guardians who possess the eyes of wisdom.

Also chant: "In the Buddha, dharma, and supreme assembly. . . ."[59] Meditate upon the continuous recitation of the words while reflecting on their meaning. Direct your attention to the sources of refuge and rest your mind one-pointedly, free from distraction.

Next, cultivate bodhichitta by reciting: "Until attaining the essence of awakening. . . ."[60] Meditate on the four immeasurables,† [reciting:] "May all sentient beings have happiness and the causes of happiness. . . ."[61]

At the conclusion [of the session, visualize that] the sources of refuge with their thrones and seats melt into light and dissolve into you. Think that your body, speech, and mind and the body, speech, and mind of the sources of refuge become inseparable. Within that state, relax your mind in its own nature without contrivance. Without thinking of anything, rest evenly in vibrant clarity (*gsal sing nge ba*) that is free from conceptual identification. When a thought arises, recite [the dedication]:

> By this merit[62]
> May I quickly accomplish mahāmudrā,
> And establish all beings without exception
> In that state.

With that, seal the roots of virtue with dedication and enter into 24b
the activities [of postmeditation].

[BODHICHITTA: THE EXTENSIVE EXPLANATION]

Teaching Session 9

In general, there are two ways of developing bodhichitta: that of the Hīnayāna and that of the Mahāyāna. In the first, because peace and happiness are desired for oneself, although it is the development of bodhichitta, it is a path that does not take one very far. As is said:

> To be a shrāvaka or a pratyekabuddha creates
> A lasting hindrance for the attainment of awakening.

It is also said:

> Because one lacks method and knowledge,† one falls to the state of a shrāvaka.

[Through the Hīnayāna] one simply [attains] the awakening of the shrāvakas or pratyekabuddhas; one is unable to attain the ultimate awakening.

Here, you must apply yourself to developing bodhichitta in accordance with the Mahāyāna. There are numerous points concerning this:

1. The classifications in terms of its essence (*ngo bo'i sgo nas dbye ba*)
2. Its defining characteristics (*mtshan nyid*)
3. Its causes and conditions (*rgyu rkyen*)
4. Its classifications (*dbye ba*)
5. Its demarcations (*sa mtshams*)

1. THE CLASSIFICATIONS IN TERMS OF ITS ESSENCE In the Mahāyāna, [bodhichitta] is classified as either the development of relative bodhichitta or the development of ultimate bodhichitta. The *Sūtra Unraveling the Intention*[63] states:

> There are two types of bodhichitta: ultimate bodhichitta and relative bodhichitta.

2. ITS DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS Knowledge (*mkhyen pa*) that is
25f directed towards complete awakening for the benefit of others is the defining characteristic of the development of relative bodhichitta in the Mahāyāna. The *Ornament for Clear Realization*[64] says:

> The cultivation of bodhichitta is
> To wish for true, complete awakening for the welfare of others.

3. ITS CAUSES AND CONDITIONS Although numerous ones have been taught, to be concise, [the causes and conditions] are to have faith in the victorious ones and their sons and daughters, to have affection for sentient beings, and to be guided completely by a spiritual mentor. As is said:

> The root of that is compassion:
> The intention to always benefit sentient beings.

The *Lamp of the Jewels Sūtra* explains:

> If there is faith in the victorious ones and the dharma of the victorious ones,
> Faith in the activities of the sons and daughters of the victorious ones,
> And faith in unsurpassable awakening,
> The bodhichitta of great beings will develop.

The *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*[65] states:

> "You should rely upon the Buddha, dharma, and spiritual mentors."
> Thus, the Victorious One, endowed with the supreme of all qualities, taught.

4. ITS CLASSIFICATIONS There are twenty-two, from the development of earthlike bodhichitta to the development of cloudlike bodhichitta mentioned in the *Ornament for Clear Realization*, beginning with:[66]

> Earth, gold, moon, fire....

And ending:

> Are the twenty-two types.

There are also four classifications for the cultivation of bodhi- 25b
chitta: engagement through belief (*mos pas spyod pa*), a pure altruistic attitude (*lhag bsam rnam dag*), maturation (*rnam par smin pa*), and the relinquishment of obscurations (*sgrib pa spangs pa*). These are presented in the *Ornament for the Sūtras*:[67]

> The cultivation of bodhichitta on the bhūmis†
> Is said specifically to involve belief, altruistic attitude,
> Maturation,
> And also the relinquishment of obscurations.

5. ITS DEMARCATIONS As for the development of [the twenty-two types of] bodhichitta, earth[like] and so forth: The first three similes [1-3] refer to the bhūmi of beginners.† The following one [4] is considered the path of preparation.† Then there are ten [5-14] that correspond to the ten bhūmis.† The following five [15-19]

refer to the special paths of the ten bhūmis.† The last three [20-22] refer to the bhūmi of buddhahood.[68]

The four [classifications], belief and so forth, refer to [the bhūmi of] beginners, the seven impure bhūmis,† the three pure bhūmis,† and the bhūmi of buddhahood.[69]

Furthermore, there are three ways to cultivate bodhichitta: like a king, like a shepherd, and like a ferryman.[70]

[ASPIRATIONAL AND ENGAGED BODHICHITTA]

There are two types [of relative bodhichitta]: aspirational (*smon pa*) and engaged (*'jug pa*). *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*[71] says:

> To summarize this bodhichitta,
> It should be understood to be of two types:
> Aspirational bodhichitta
> And engaged bodhichitta.

The distinction between these two is like [the difference between]
26a the wish to go to the state of true awakening and [actually] going.
Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva[72] continues:

> Just as one understands the difference between
> Wishing to go and going,
> So the wise should understand
> The difference between these two [types of bodhichitta] respectively.

Aspirational [bodhichitta] is to be committed with one's focus on the result. Engaged [bodhichitta] is to be committed with one's focus on the cause. The objects of focus are (1) awakening and (2) the welfare of sentient beings.

1. [To focus on awakening] means to focus on discovering the wisdom of the Mahāyāna. It is said in the *Ornament for the Sūtras*:[73]

> In that way, focus on discovering that wisdom.

2. To focus on sentient beings means to focus on all beings, who pervade space, and to give rise to bodhichitta in order to

remove their suffering. The *Aspiration for Excellent Conduct*[74] says:

> Sentient beings are limitless,
> Extending as far as the ends of space;
> May my aspiration prayers also be limitless,
> Extending to the ends of their karma and mental afflictions.

[DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIVE AND ULTIMATE BODHICHITTA]

The development of relative bodhichitta arises from coarse symbols and the development of ultimate bodhichitta arises from the
force of ultimate dharmatā.† As for the first, the *Ornament for the* 26b
Sūtras[75] states:

> It is explained that bodhichitta develops
> Through the power of friends, the power of the cause, the power of the root,
> The power of hearing, and through familiarization with virtue;
> It is unstable [when based on the first,] teachings by others, and stable [in the other cases].

As for the cause of the development of ultimate bodhichitta, it says:[76]

> Arising from pleasing the perfect Buddha
> And fully gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom,
> Wisdom, which does not conceptualize[77] phenomena,
> Is asserted to be ultimate.

[Ultimate bodhichitta] develops from the special realizations and practices that accord with the scriptures. The nature of ultimate bodhichitta is emptiness unified with compassion (*stong nyid snying rje'i snying po can*). It is clear yet unmoving and free from conceptual elaborations.† It is said in the *Sūtra Unraveling the Intention*:

> Ultimate bodhichitta transcends the world, is free from conceptual elaborations, is extremely clear, is the ultimate subject aspect [i.e., mind], is unsullied,

> unmoving, and brilliant, like the continuum of a candle flame not [blown by] the wind.

As for the demarcation [of ultimate bodhichitta]: it is present from the first bhūmi through the bhūmi of buddhahood. The *Commentary on the "Ornament for the Sūtras"* states:

> The cultivation of ultimate bodhichitta is for those on the first bhūmi, Very Joyful, and the others.

[THE TRANSMISSION OF RELATIVE BODHICHITTA]

The Source from Which Relative Bodhichitta May Be Received

27f The *Lamp for the Path to Awakening*[78] states:

> You should take the vows from an excellent guru
> Who is fully qualified.
> One who is skilled in the vow ceremony,
> Who keeps whatever vows he or she has, and
> Who bestows the vows with patience and compassion
> Should be known as an excellent guru.

Accordingly, [the bodhisattva vows] should be received from a fully qualified guru. If you are unable [to receive them from someone] like that, you can receive the vows of aspiration and engagement by sincerely reciting three times the words for whichever bodhichitta [vow] you are taking, in front of an image of the Tathāgata. The *Bodhisattva Bhūmis*[79] says:

> If there is no individual endowed with those excellent qualities, bodhisattvas should correctly take the vow of the ethical conduct of a bodhisattva by themselves in front of an image of the Tathāgata.

If there is no such [image], you may take [the vows] by visualizing [the buddhas] in front of yourself, as is said in the *Compendium of Trainings*:[80]

> If there is no such spiritual mentor, meditate that the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions are actually [present], and take the vows through your own power.

The Ceremony for Receiving [the Vows of Relative Bodhichitta]

Although there are numerous [ceremonies, the one presented] 27b
here accords with the tradition of the master Shāntideva, which was transmitted by the noble Mañjushrī to the master Nāgārjuna. This has three parts: (1) the preparation, (2) the actual ceremony, and (3) the conclusion.

1. [THE PREPARATION] The principal cause for developing aspirational and engaged bodhichitta lies in the accumulation of merit, which arises through the power of the three jewels. Therefore, to begin with, you should arrange vast clouds of offerings in front of the three jewels, the buddhas, and bodhisattvas. Since the seven-branch prayer† must precede [the actual ceremony, at this point] it is recited either in an extended or an abbreviated form. If using the abbreviated form, [the students] recite after [the teacher] three times:

> I dedicate whatever slight virtue is accumulated by
> Prostrating, offering, confessing,
> Rejoicing, requesting, and supplicating
> To great, complete awakening.

2. THE ACTUAL CEREMONY The bodhichitta vows should be preceded by taking refuge three times. [Students] should be instructed in the following way: Imagine in the space in front, [seated] on a precious throne supported by lions, the Teacher, the true, perfect Buddha. His color is like molten gold, his two hands are in the earth-pressing and meditative-equipoise mudrās.† He is wearing the three dharma robes, is adorned with the major and minor
marks, and is sitting cross-legged. Seated [around him], filling 28f
space, are the bodhisattva saṅgha (such as the eight close sons), the shrāvaka saṅgha, and the others. Regarding the Buddha as the teacher, the dharma as the path, and the saṅgha as friends, [the students] should think, "Just as the previous bodhisattvas gave rise to aspirational and engaged bodhichitta, I too will cultivate bodhichitta for the sake of all sentient beings, who have all been my kind parents."

[The students] recite after [the teacher] three times: "Until attaining the essence of awakening...those trainings."[81] Thus, they give rise to bodhichitta by combining aspirational and engaged

[bodhichitta].

3. THE CONCLUDING CEREMONY To create joy for themselves, [the students] recite after [the teacher] once:

> Now my life has become fruitful:
> I have attained an excellent human existence.
> Now I have been born into the family of buddhas
> And have become a son or daughter of the buddhas.
>
> Now whatever I do
> Will be in accord with this family.
> I will not sully
> This faultless, exalted family.[82]

28b To create joy for others, [the students] recite after [the teacher] once:

> Today, in the presence of the protectors,
> I have invited all beings to a celebration of
> Sugatahood and to [the enjoyment of] happiness
>   until then.
> May gods, demigods, and others rejoice.[83]

[The teacher should continue to instruct the students] by telling them, "There are two types of precepts (*bslab bya*): (1) those pertaining to refuge and (2) those for bodhichitta.

"1. [The precepts for refuge] are described in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*:

> "Whoever takes refuge in the Buddha
> Is a true upāsaka,†
> Who never reveres
> Gods or others.
>
> "Whoever takes refuge in the genuine dharma
> Is free from an intention to harm or kill.
> Whoever takes refuge in the saṅgha
> Does not associate with tīrthikas.†

"2. [The precepts for bodhichitta] are as is said:

> "There is nothing a bodhisattva
> Does not train in.[84]

"If gone into extensively, these would be very numerous. To summarize [the precepts for bodhichitta]: you should respect Mahāyāna gurus, abandon the four negative qualities† (*nag po'i chos bzhi*), rely upon the four positive qualities† (*dkar po'i chos bzhi*), and not develop an attitude that forsakes sentient beings.

"To summarize the precepts for aspirational [bodhichitta]: you should think, 'I will attain buddhahood for the welfare of all sentient beings.' The precepts for engaged [bodhichitta] are that you should not perform any negative actions, which are pointless, and you should engage in what is virtuous as much as you can.

"To give an extensive [presentation]: according to the explanation found in the *Ornament of Liberation*,[85] the synopsis of the 29f
precepts for aspirational [bodhichitta] is as follows:

> "Not developing an attitude that forsakes sentient
>   beings,
> Remembering the benefits of that attitude,
> Gathering the two accumulations,
> Repeatedly training in bodhichitta,
> And adopting the four positive qualities and rejecting
>   the four negative ones
> Are the five points that contain the precepts for the
>   aspiration.

"The precepts for engaged [bodhichitta] are primarily the three trainings, which are contained within the six pāramitās. It is from this perspective that the synopsis [in the *Ornament of Liberation*][86] states:

> "Generosity, ethical conduct, patience,
> Diligence, meditative concentration, and knowledge
> Are the six points that
> Contain the precepts for developing the bodhichitta
>   of engagement.

"Without mistaking what is to be adopted and what is to be rejected, what is to be engaged in and what is to be avoided, you should practice the genuine dharma. The benefits of cultivating bodhichitta are taught in the *Questions of the Householder Shrīdatta Sūtra*:[87]

"If the merit of bodhichitta
Had a form
It would fill the realm of space,
And even more would remain.

"*Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*[88] says:

"The instant bodhichitta arises,
Those who are afflicted, bound in saṃsāra's prison,
29b Will be called 'sons and daughters of the sugatas,'
And will be revered by the world of gods and humans.

"It also says:[89]

"Once this intention has been correctly adopted,
From that moment on, even when asleep
Or when inattentive, the force of this merit
Will be uninterrupted;
Its manifestation will equal the [limitless] sky.

"The defects of abandoning bodhichitta are that you will be reborn in the lower states, your [ability] to benefit others will be impaired, and your achievement of the bhūmis will be impeded and delayed. As is said:[90]

"Having made such a commitment,
If I do not fulfill it through action,
Thus deceiving all sentient beings,
What will be my rebirth?

"You should correctly understand the benefits and defects expressed in such quotations, which are infinite. If you earnestly take [the development of bodhichitta] to heart, without being mistaken about what is to be adopted and what is to be rejected, you will become fully and completely awakened without delay. This must be kept in mind."

After [the teacher] has said that, the dedications and aspiration prayers should be made.

2. THE MEDITATION AND RECITATION OF VAJRASATTVA, WHICH PURIFY NEGATIVE ACTIONS AND OBSCURATIONS

Teaching Session 10 and Meditation Session 9

In general, all virtues and negative actions depend upon your motivation, as is said in the *Precious Garland*:

The mind is the prerequisite for all phenomena;
Thus the mind is said to be the principal [agent]. 30f

The *Treasury of Abhidharma*[91] states:

Intention is the karma of the mind,
Which produces physical and verbal karma.

Motivation involving the mental afflictions (such as desire or aggression) [will produce] the ten nonvirtuous actions, the five acts of immediate consequence, the five secondary acts of immediate consequence, infractions of your vows and samayas,[†] and so forth. You may perform these acts yourself, cause others to perform them, or take delight in them. Not only that, a motivation involving desire, aggression, or any of the mental afflictions [will turn] even acts of listening to and reflecting on [the dharma] into negative actions and nonvirtue.

[THE TWO OBSCURATIONS]

There are two types of obscuration: (1) the obscuration of mental afflictions (*nyon mongs kyi sgrib pa*) and (2) the obscuration regarding objects of knowledge[†] (*shes bya'i sgrib pa*). The first obscures liberation and the second obscures omniscience.

1. [THE OBSCURATION OF MENTAL AFFLICTIONS] According to the lower abhidharma,[†] there are ninety-eight subtle-increasers.[†] According to the higher abhidharma,[†] there are one hundred and twenty-eight subtle-increasers. These can be condensed into what are known as the six root mental afflictions (desire, anger, pride, ignorance, doubts, and [wrong] views) and the twenty secondary mental afflictions[†] (wrath and the others). Those are summed up as three: desire, aggression, and delusion.

2. THE OBSCURATION REGARDING OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE This refers to thoughts involving apprehended objects (*gzung rtog*) and

an apprehending subject (*'dzin rtog*). These are included in the process of apprehending all possible objects of knowledge as char-
30b acteristics. All of these are summed up as apprehending the ground, path, and result as characteristics.

The result of these [obscurations] is suffering. *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*[92] says:

> Suffering arises from nonvirtue.
> "How can I be definitely liberated from that?"
> It makes sense to be concerned with this alone
> Throughout the day and night.

[THE FOUR POWERS]

Negative actions will be purified if they are confessed. A confession must incorporate the four powers (*stobs bzhi*):

1. The power of regret (*sun 'byin pa'i stobs*), which is to have remorse for all previously committed negative actions

2. The power of applying remedies (*gnyen po kun tu spyod pa'i stobs*)

3. The power of turning away from evil (*nyes pa las ldog pa'i stobs*)

4. The power of reliance (*rten gyi stobs*)

1. [The power of regret] is to feel remorse for what you have concluded is (a) meaningless, (b) fear[-inspiring], and (c) necessary to be quickly separated from.

a. Think that all the negative actions you have done—to defeat your enemies, to protect your friends, for the sake of wealth, and so forth—were committed only for the aims of this lifetime. When you die these things will not accompany[93] you, but their karma will follow you like a shadow. You have undergone great difficulties to accomplish those things and yet there has been no result for you but fatigue. The *Questions of the Householder Shrīdatta Sūtra* says:

> 31a Parents, siblings, children, and spouses,
> Servants, wealth, and relatives
> Will not go with you after death;
> [But] your karma will go with you and follow you.

Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva[94] states:

> Everything must be left behind and I must go;
> Yet not understanding this,
> I have committed various negative actions
> For the sake of friends and enemies.

b. The result of negative actions will be pain at the moment of death and great fear [when you see] the messengers of Yama after death and when you take rebirth in the lower states, such as the hells.

c. Fearing those [consequences], you must immediately purify your negative actions because, if you die suddenly without having purified your negative actions, there is the danger that you will end up in a pit from which there is no liberation. *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*[95] says:

> I may die before
> Purifying my negative actions;
> Please protect me in a way that
> Quickly and definitely frees me from this [situation].

It also says:[96]

> The lord of death, who cannot be trusted,
> Does not wait for things to be done or undone.
> Whether sick or not, no one
> Can trust this ephemeral life.

Thus, for these three reasons, you should feel remorse and make confessions in the presence of the special sources [of refuge]. This is like petitioning a threatening person to whom 31b
you owe a debt.

2. The power [of applying a remedy] means that the remedy for negative actions is virtuous conduct. Many negative actions can be destroyed by just a single virtuous one, as is said in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*:

One virtuous action destroys many negative ones.

The *Genuine Golden Light Sūtra*[97] comments:

Whoever has committed an overwhelming number of
negative actions
Throughout thousands of aeons,
Will be able to purify all of them
By fully confessing just once.

This is like washing one's dirty clothes and anointing oneself with perfume.

3. The power [of turning away from evil] is to make a commitment to end negative actions henceforth, being frightened of their maturation, as is said:[98]

Guides, please hear me:
I acknowledge my negative actions and errors.
Since they are not positive,
I shall not repeat them.

This is like diverting a stream.

4. The power [of reliance] is to take refuge in the three jewels and develop bodhichitta. The *Narrative of Sūkarikā*[99] states:

Those who take refuge in the Buddha
Will not be born in the lower states.
32f Having given up their human bodies,
They will attain the forms of gods.

Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva[100] says:

Although one has committed overwhelming negative
actions,
Reliance on this brings immediate liberation,
Just like relying on a warrior when greatly afraid.
Why do those who are heedful not rely on this?

This is like someone in danger clinging to a person who is strong, or like poison being transformed by mantras.

Although Aṅgulimālā had murdered nine hundred and ninety-nine people, Udayana had murdered his mother, Nanda had been infatuated with women, and Ajātashatru had murdered his father, each purified his negative actions with one of the four powers and attained the level of an arhat, stream-enterer,† and so forth. As is said:

Whoever was negligent before,
Yet later becomes heedful,
Will be beautified, like the moon freed from clouds,
Like Nanda, Aṅgulimālā, Ajātashatru, and Udayana.†

[THE VAJRASATTVA MEDITATION INSTRUCTIONS]

Teaching Session 11 and Meditation Session 10

[Of the remedies that constitute] the power of applying remedies (from among the four powers), the supreme is to rely on the meditation and recitation of Vajrasattva.

This being the case, conceive of yourself in the ordinary way 32b
and visualize on your head a PAṂ [syllable] that changes into a white lotus. Above that an A changes into a moon disk. Above that a HŪṂ changes into a white five-pronged vajra whose middle is marked by a HŪṂ. Light radiating from that makes offerings to the noble ones and benefits beings. The light returns, transforming [the vajra] into the form of the bhagavat Vajrasattva, in essence your root guru.

He is white, with one face and two arms. With his right hand he holds a five-pronged vajra to his heart in the gesture of praise, and with his left hand he gracefully rests the handle of a bell on his hip. He is seated in the bodhisattva position.† His upper and lower garments are of various types of divine silk. His hair is bound up in a topknot, the top of which is adorned with the guru Akṣhobhya. He is adorned with ornaments made of precious substances: a crown, earrings, short necklace, upper arm bracelets, wrist bracelets, anklets, belt, long necklace, and others. He is beautified by the major and minor marks and radiates boundless light. His [form] appears yet lacks any inherent nature, manifesting like an image reflected in a mirror.

Visualize in his heart center a moon disk, on top of which is a
white HŪṂ. This is surrounded by "OṂ VAJRASATTVA HŪṂ," fol- 33f

lowed by "OṂ VAJRASATTVA SAMAYAM...SATTVA ĀḤ."[101] [Both mantras garlands] are white, like strings of pearls, and circle clockwise. Light radiating from these invokes the gurus of the ten directions and three times, yidams, buddhas, bodhisattvas, ḍākas, ḍākinīs, dharma protectors, and guardians, who then dissolve into Vajrasattva on top of your head. Regarding him as the embodiment of the sources of refuge, recite:

> Guru Vajrasattva, please cleanse and purify the negative actions, obscurations, faults, and downfalls of myself and all sentient beings, whose numbers are as vast as the extent of space.

Having thus supplicated, a white stream of wisdom nectar drips from the seed-syllable, mantra garlands, and moon in the guru Vajrasattva's heart center. The white [nectar] completely fills his entire body. The excess flows slowly from his right toe, like beer being poured from a jug, and enters your opening of Brahmā.† All the negative actions, obscurations, sickness, demons, broken and impaired samayas, unfavorable conditions, and impurities that you have accumulated in your succession of lives throughout beginning-
33b ningless time in saṃsāra are swept along in the form of pus and blood, soot, or black sludge, just like chaff being carried off by a billow of water. Leaving your body through its two lower doors, sense orifices, pores, and finger tips, this black [mass] winds downwards and dissolves into the powerful golden ground.

Think that your body becomes purified, resplendently white, and completely filled with wisdom nectar. The excess rises up and touches Vajrasattva's foot. Thinking in this way, recite the hundred-syllable and six-syllable mantras as much as you can. At the end, join the palms of your hands at your heart and say:

> Protector, through ignorance and delusion,
> I have transgressed and broken my samaya.
> Guru Vajrasattva, please grant me refuge.
> Leader, vajra-holder,
> The embodiment of compassion,[102]
> I take refuge in you, leader of beings.
>
> I admit and confess all broken and impaired root and branch samayas of body, speech, and mind. Please grant your blessings so that my negative actions, obscurations, faults, and downfalls may be cleansed and purified.

Following this supplication, think that the guru Vajrasattva on top of your head is pleased, smiles upon you, and says, "Child of good family, your negative actions, obscurations, faults, and downfalls
are cleansed and purified," thereby giving his assurance. With that, 34a
he melts into light and dissolves into you. Think that the guru Vajrasattva's body, speech, and mind and your body, speech, and mind become inseparable, like water poured into water. Rest in that state without any reference point (*mi dmigs pa*). When a thought arises, seal [the practice] with dedications and aspiration prayers, dedicating the roots of virtue to awakening, and enter into the activities [of postmeditation].

[THE SIGNS]

By meditating in this way, signs of the purification of negative actions and obscurations may arise. Your body might feel light and you may need less sleep. You may feel happy and joyful. You might also have dreams of bathing; being naked; expelling, eliminating, or vomiting pus and blood from your body; wearing white clothing, and so forth. Furthermore, to dream of vomiting bad food; drinking yogurt or milk; seeing the sun and moon; moving through the sky; seeing blazing fires, water buffaloes, dark and powerful people, or the saṅgha of bhikṣhus and bhikṣhuṇīs; [seeing] trees that give milk, elephants, or bulls; ascending a mountain, a lion throne, or [the roof of] a palace; listening to the dharma, and so forth are all signs of having purified your negative actions and obscurations.

It will not do to stop [practicing] when such signs arise. You
must continue to exert yourself in meditation. 34b

3. THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAṆḌALA [OFFERING], WHICH PERFECTS THE TWO ACCUMULATIONS

Teaching Session 12 and Meditation Session 11

[GATHERING THE TWO ACCUMULATIONS]

In general, once you have developed a pure altruistic attitude, any virtue you engage in will become the cause of the two accumula-

tions. Among [virtuous activities], training in the six pāramitās is the best method for perfecting the two accumulations. According to the *Entrance to the Middle Way*,[103] the first three pāramitās are the accumulation of merit and the last three are the accumulation of wisdom, as it says:[104]

> The three qualities of generosity and so forth
> Were commended commonly to householders by the
> Sugata.
> These are the accumulation of what is called "merit."

According to the texts by Maitreya and others, the first two are the accumulation of merit; the pāramitā of knowledge is the accumulation of wisdom; and patience, diligence, and meditative concentration assist both accumulations. As is said:[105]

> Generosity and ethical conduct
> Are the accumulation of merit; knowledge is wisdom;
> And the other three appear as both.

Alternatively, the pāramitā of generosity is the accumulation of merit and the latter five are the accumulation of wisdom, as is said:

35f > Five [belong to] the accumulation of wisdom.

Moreover, in this context, pleasing the guru will fully perfect the accumulations. The reason for this is that pleasing the Buddha [creates] a great accumulation [of merit and wisdom], and there is no greater buddha than the guru. Therefore, you should please the guru by making offerings and so forth with your body, speech, and mind. It is said:[106]

> Arising from pleasing the perfect Buddha and
> Gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom,
> Wisdom, which does not conceptualize phenomena,
> Is asserted to be ultimate.

The *Five Stages*[107] says:

> Abandoning all offerings,
> One commences the supreme offering [to] the guru.
> Through pleasing him or her,
> Supreme omniscient wisdom is attained.

It is said in the *Shrīsaṃbhava's Biography*:[108]

> The merit of bodhisattvas is protected by spiritual mentors.

It is said in the *Eight Thousand Stanza Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*:[109]

> Thus, since bodhisattvas, mahāsattvas,† wish to fully and completely attain unsurpassable, true, complete awakening, they should first approach, attend, and respectfully serve a spiritual mentor.

It also says: 35b

> Bodhisattvas, mahāsattvas, who are guided completely by a spiritual mentor will quickly [attain] unsurpassable, true, complete awakening.[110]

GATHERING THE ACCUMULATIONS OF A KUSĀLI[111]

Say PHAṬ and visualize that, from the center point of your heart, your mind immediately appears[112] as Vajrayoginī. She is red, with one face and two arms. She holds a hooked knife aloft with her right[113] hand, a skull cup filled with nectar to her heart with her left hand, and is adorned with bleached white bone ornaments. She plants three human heads, the size of Mount Meru, in front. With her hooked knife, she quickly places the top of your skull above those [three heads]. The outside of the skull cup is white, its inside is red. Its forehead is marked by an ĀḤ, which faces towards you. It is vast and spacious.

Then Vajrayoginī slices off the right shoulder section of your upper torso, places it inside the skull cup, and stirs this with her hooked knife. With "OṂ VAJRA AMṚITA KUṆḌALI[114] HANA HANA HŪṂ PHAṬ" and "SVABHĀVA..."[115] purify this into emptiness. [Say:] "From within emptiness, this becomes a great ocean of wisdom nectar." Bless it three times with "OṂ ĀḤ HŪṂ." [Chant:] "I offer this great ocean of wisdom nectar to the Kagyü gurus, the 36f
roots of blessings, OṂ ĀḤ HŪṂ. I offer it to the assembly of yidams, the root of siddhis, OṂ ĀḤ HŪṂ. ARGHAṂ...[116] Please receive [this offering] with your hollow vajra tongues and be content." Finally, they become invisible, like a rainbow vanishing.

Next cut off the upper left section of your torso and place it in

the skull cup. [Recite:] "AMṚTA... I invite the wisdom protectors with their retinues and the dharma protectors and guardians who have promised to guard the Buddha's teachings to gather like clouds in the space in front. Please receive [this offering] with your hollow vajra tongues and be content. May undefiled bliss fill your minds." Then meditate without any object of observation.

Next place the lower right section of your torso in the skull cup. [Say:] "AMṚTA... NAMO SARVA TATHĀGATA AVALOKITE OṂ SAMBHARA SAMBHARA HŪṂ. I pay homage to the tathāgata Many Jewels. I pay homage to the tathāgata Truly Beautiful Form.[117] I pay homage to Infinite Supreme Body. I pay homage to Completely Fearless. I give this to all sentient beings—those of the six classes, the five streams of being,† and the four modes of birth,† beginning
36b with my kind parents. May all of you be satisfied with whatever food and clothing you desire, and may undefiled bliss fill your mind-streams."

Next place the lower left section of your torso in the skull cup. Recite "AMṚTA...," the SAMBHARA [mantra], and the names of the four tathāgatas† as above.[118] [Chant:] "I give this ocean of wisdom nectar to all the hungry ghosts—led by the queen of hungry ghosts, She with Blazing Mouth—who are as numerous as the hundreds of billions of grains of sands in the Ganges river, and who are tormented by hunger, thirst, and poverty. May you be satisfied with whatever food and clothing you desire, and may undefiled bliss fill your mind-streams." Thinking that they attain buddhahood, rest without any object of observation. Following this recite:

> May these offerings please the victorious ones.
> May the commitments of the samaya-holders be fulfilled.
> May the desires of the beings of the six classes be satisfied.
> May the kindness of my parents be repaid.[119]
>
> Spirits who have assembled here....[120]

Seal this by dedicating the roots of virtue to awakening and making aspiration prayers. This is the gathering of the accumulations of a kusāli.[121]

[THE MAṆḌALA OFFERING PRACTICE INSTRUCTIONS]

Teaching Session 13 and Meditation Session 12

Although there are numerous stages to the gathering of the accu- 37a
mulations, this gathering of the accumulations, based on the maṇḍala [offering], appears as a preliminary to all the stages of instructions and is the superior [method]. To gather the accumulations using this [method], two maṇḍalas [are necessary]: (1) a practice maṇḍala (*sgrub pa'i maṇḍal*) and (2) an offering maṇḍala (*mchod pa'i maṇḍal*).

[THE PRACTICE MAṆḌALA]

If you have two maṇḍalas that are [made from] precious substances, use the larger and better quality one as the focal support for the practice maṇḍala and use the slightly inferior one as the focal support for the offering maṇḍala. If you have only one, use that for the practice maṇḍala and use a piece of wood or a stone as the focal support for the offering maṇḍala. If you cannot acquire any of those, you can simply visualize them.

If [such maṇḍalas] are available, the larger they are, the greater the merit. If [a maṇḍala] is made from precious substances, it should be at least four finger-widths in size. If you are using [a material] such as clay, stone, wood, or the like, [the maṇḍala] should be at least a span; something smaller than that should not be used. It should be round and the top surface should be smooth and even, with the center slightly higher and raised,[122] [though] not [so much that] the offering-piles and heaps scatter. The round mountain, whose [height] is one-sixth of [the diameter of] the top, should be surrounded by a beautiful and pleasing [side] below.

[The maṇḍala] should not be cracked, chipped, broken, or
rusted. Anoint it with scented water, if you have it, without leaving 37b
streaks. If there are imperfections on the middle [of the maṇḍala], they will bring harm to your guru; if they are on the front, they will bring harm to you; if they are on the right, they will bring harm to your parents and relatives; if they are on the left, they will bring harm to your dharma brothers and sisters; and if they are on the back, they will bring harm to your retinue and wealth.

As for the offering-piles (*tshom bu*): the best is to use precious substances; the middling is to use conch or cowry shells; and the

inferior is to use good quality grains, such as barley or rice. There is a samaya not to leave [the top of] the maṇḍala empty.

Think that all the illnesses, demons, negative actions, obscurations, and everything unclean pertaining to yourself and others, the environment and beings, are thoroughly purified as you do either of the following cleansing procedures (whichever you prefer) three times, while holding[123] the maṇḍala in your [left] hand and a handful of flower petals in your right fist. Following the kriyā [tantra] tradition, rub [the maṇḍala] in a clockwise direction, set the protection for the maṇḍala,[124] and arrange the offering-piles. Or, following the Buddhist tradition, rub [the maṇḍala] in a counter-clockwise direction, set the protection for the maṇḍala, and arrange the offering-piles. Arrange the offering-piles in the center and [around] the edge, without making [the piles] too close, or crooked, scattered, or of unequal portions.

Cleanse and purify[125] the actual practice maṇḍala. Visualize that from within emptiness, the maṇḍala [manifests as] a precious
38f palace, which is square and is complete with all the attributes, such as the four gateways, ornaments, and arches. Inside this, arrange the five offering-piles in the center and so forth and visualize the sources of refuge [as described] in the refuge section: In the center is a throne upheld by eight wrestlers and lions; on top of it are lotus, sun, and moon seats. Seated on this is your root guru, surrounded by the gurus of the Kagyü lineage. Visualize [the other sources of refuge] in the four directions, that is, the yidams in front and so forth.

On the heads of all the deities is [the syllable] OṂ, at their throats an ĀḤ, and at their hearts a HŪṂ. Light radiates from the HŪṂ, inviting the wisdom beings (San. *jñānasattva*, Tib. *ye shes pa*), similar to those meditated on, [to come] from their natural abodes, surrounded by the buddhas and bodhisattvas. They dissolve indivisibly [into the visualized deities]. Request them to remain in the space in front of you. Place the practice maṇḍala in the center of your altar or, if you do not have one, place it in a suitable place that is elevated and spacious, somewhere that you keep the supports for offerings, [such as] a clean shelf that has been beautified.

THE OFFERING MAṆḌALA

Sit in front of that [practice maṇḍala] on a slightly lower seat.

Hold the maṇḍala in your left hand and, holding the offering-pile substances in your right hand, recite the hundred-syllable mantra once in conjunction with rubbing the maṇḍala to clean away the 38b
dust, as you did before. While doing this, think that you are thoroughly purifying the negative actions and obscurations of yourself and others, which are included within apprehended objects and apprehending subjects.

You should synchronize reciting the liturgy, doing the visualizations, and arranging the offering-piles. Recite from "OṂ VAJRA BHŪMI ĀḤ HŪṂ. The pure ground is the earth of vajra-nature.... Having accepted it, please grant your blessings."[126] Then recite: "The earth is perfumed with scented water...."[127] and "Having offered this excellent, pleasing maṇḍala ...."[128] and:

> I present outer, inner, secret, and suchness offerings
> To the assembly of gurus, the perfection of the three
> kāyas.†
> Having accepted my body, wealth, and all that exists,
> Please bestow the unsurpassable supreme siddhi.
> Please bestow the siddhi of mahāmudrā.

If you [wish to be more] elaborate, recite: "To the gurus and vajra masters, dwelling in the ten directions and three times...."[129] and "I offer the body, wealth, and roots of virtue of myself and all infinite beings to the gurus and the precious three jewels...."[130] and "All-knowing and all-seeing deities, please hear me...."[131]

You should also exert yourself in gathering [the accumulations] and purifying [negative actions] through whatever means you know, such as making a general confession,[132] offering a seven-
branch prayer, or [reciting other verses of] offerings and praises. 39f
Finally, dissolve the assembly of deities of the practice maṇḍala indivisibly into yourself and dedicate the virtue to awakening.

[THE SIGNS]

As signs of perfecting the accumulations, you will not feel hungry even when you have not eaten much food. Because your knowledge has unfolded, you will understand many teachings that you had not previously understood and will remember many teachings that you had forgotten. You will feel joyous and your mind will become workable. You may dream of women presenting you with

food and drink; the rising of the sun or moon; going uphill; walking in fields of flowers and picking flowers; wearing new clothes; wearing jewelry; crossing water and reaching the other side; crossing water in a boat or via a bridge; cleaning or looking into a maṇḍala or mirror; blowing a conch, beating a large drum, or playing musical instruments; looking at a temple, and so forth. To dream of such things just once is not definitive, but when such signs arise repeatedly as actual experiences or in dreams, they are true signs that you have perfected the accumulations to some degree.

4. GURU YOGA, WHICH SWIFTLY CONFERS BLESSINGS

Teaching Session 14 and Meditation Session 13

39b The root of all experiences and realizations is guru yoga. In this regard, if a student who is a worthy recipient, sincerely and one-pointedly supplicates a fully qualified guru, with the highest degree of irreversible devotion, she or he will undoubtedly manifest the wisdom of mahāmudrā in this very life, with this very body. Moreover, because our lineage is a lineage of blessings, if you do not receive the guru's blessings, it is impossible for experiences and realizations to arise. However, when such blessings are received, all the realizations of the meaning of the empowerments will arise instantly in your mind-stream. For this to occur, the student and master must have a karmic connection and be fully qualified.

[THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR GURUS]

[According to the Vinaya]

In the vinaya,[†] there are two types of preceptors (San. *upādhyāya*, Tib. *mkhan po*): for the novice [vows] and for full-ordination; and five types of masters (San. *āchārya*, Tib. *slob dpon*): the ritual master, the resident master, the reading master, the master for private matters, and the master for the shramaṇera[†] [vows]. It is said in the *Root Vinaya Sūtra*:[133]

> Because they [transmit the vows of] the novice or full ordination, some bhikṣhus are preceptors.

It also says:

> They are masters [as well]: for private matters, for the ritual, for the residence, and for reading.

Such preceptors should possess four qualities: the branches of being well-disciplined, reliable, learned, and able to benefit [others]. 40f
The branch of benefiting [others] is, as is said:

> To be endowed with compassion and patience; [to possess] a pure inner retinue;
> To exert oneself in the two ways to benefit [others]; to be in accord with the view and qualifications;
> To know how to speak properly; to be able to comprehend the meaning [of speech]; to have a sound mind;
> To have an ordinary body; and to live in the ordinary realm.

It is said further:[134]

> Those who have affection for the sick, have a pure retinue,
> Exert themselves in the two ways to benefit [others]—[giving] the dharma and material goods—
> And who are timely in teaching are praised as gurus.

As for the masters:

1. The master for the shramaṇera [vows] (*dge tshul gyi slob dpon*) is a bhikṣhu endowed with the six qualities and a seventh quality of being knowledgeable in transmitting the shramaṇera vows. The six qualities are: (1) to possess the pure vows of full ordination, (2) to be in accord with the qualifications and (3) the view, (4) to possess the three conventional attributes,[†] (5) to have an ordinary body, and (6) to be of sound intention.

2. The master for private matters (*gsang ste ston pa'i slob dpon*), in addition to possessing those six qualities, is skilled in asking questions concerning obstacles [to taking the vows].

3. The master for the ritual (*las byed pa'i slob dpon*) possesses all the qualities necessary for the ritual and is able to recite the ritual ceremony from memory, without leaving out even half a word.

4. The resident master (*gnas sbyin pa'i slob dpon*), in addition to possessing the four characteristics that were explained regarding the preceptor, is able to expound what is to be adopted or
40b rejected according to the vinaya dharma, and is capable of producing purity in a student's mind-stream.

5. The master for reading (*klog pa'i slob dpon*) possesses the pure vows of his particular monastic ordination; abides in the ordinary realm; accords with the qualifications and the view; and understands the dharma of his precepts properly. Through his intellectual ability in exposition, debate, and composition regarding the tripiṭaka,† he is able to produce the gem of the three trainings in a student's mind-stream.

[According to the Mahāyāna]

In the Mahāyāna, there are numerous [descriptions of gurus], such as (1) the guru of the Pāramitāyāna and (2) the guru of the Secret Mantrayāna.

1. [ACCORDING TO THE PĀRAMITĀYĀNA] It is said in *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*:[135]

> A spiritual mentor
> Who is learned in the meaning of the Mahāyāna and
> Who possesses the bodhisattva's supreme discipline
> Should not be forsaken, even at the cost of one's life.

The *Ornament*[136] teaches:

> One should rely on spiritual mentors who are peaceful, disciplined, and thoroughly pacified;
> Who possess superior qualities, are diligent, and are rich in the scriptures;
> Who realize suchness† and are skilled in speech;
> Who are the embodiments of loving-kindness and free from weariness.

[A guru] should also possess the four distinguishing qualities and the nine secondary ones. It is said:[137]

> Vast, removers of doubt,
> Worthy of recollection, teachers of the two natures—

> These are known as the most excellent teachers
> Who are bodhisattvas.

It is also said:[138]

> The excellent qualities of supreme bodhisattvas are: 41a
> To be gentle, to be without arrogance, and to be weary [of saṃsāra];
> To have [the qualities of] clarity, diversification, and awareness;
> To have understanding, to be without material needs, and to be ubiquitous.

The master Chandrakīrti[139] taught:

> A guru, through knowing the student's mentality,
> Acts accordingly.
> The skilled gather students;
> Fools never have students.

2. ACCORDING TO THE SECRET MANTRA TRADITION It is said:

> Someone who is the equal of one's chosen deity,
> Sees the yoga fully, and has attained the perfection of the Mantra[yāna is a guru].

The *Kālachakra Tantra*[140] states:

> To begin with, those who can truly be relied upon are gurus who hold samaya and abide in the Vajrayāna. They have meditated on suchness, are free from attachments, and have purified and are completely free from stains. Entering upon the path with patience, they transmit the path to their students and dispel fears of the hells. They are those of pure conduct. They brandish the vajra staff against the māras and are renowned as Vajrasattva on this earth.

It is also said:

> In these degenerate times, masters are a mixture of faults and positive qualities;
> No one is free from faults in every regard.

Once even those who have mostly positive qualities
have been examined well,
Sons and daughters may rely upon them.

41b Thus it is said in the *Approach to the Ultimate*.[141] The *Ornament for Clear Realization*[142] states:

Those whose minds are not discouraged,
Who teach the lack of an inherent essence,
And who reject what is not in accordance with that,
Are spiritual instructors in every regard.

Even though [gurus] may not possess all those characteristics, they should have some of them and, moreover, they should not be caught up in their own concerns. The best [qualified] are endowed with the excellent qualities of the three vows, with the higher [vows] incorporating [the lower]. The least [qualified] are not veiled by a "defeat,"† and cause the students who are associated with them to engage in the genuine dharma; they should not employ their students as servants to defeat their enemies and protect their friends.

Those who collect riches through deceitful means, who seek gain through flattery, and who confuse others through guile and hypocrisy are, thereby, gurus who cause themselves and others to engage in negative actions. They are not suitable to be relied upon.

THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR STUDENTS

Although numerous qualifications for students have been taught, in brief they are as follows: [Students] should have the conviction that the guru is actually the buddhas of the three times. They should have irreversible faith and perfect devotion, and be without so much as a hair's worth of concern for this life. Recognizing the six classes of beings to have been their parents, their mind-streams should be moistened with overwhelming compassion for them. Individuals who wish to attain buddhahood in one lifetime and in
42f one body should be concerned [solely] with their objectives for their next life.

Those who, lacking such [qualities], rely on the guru for the sake of food and clothing, to become famous in this life, or as means of passing this life, are merely part of the retinue, are ser-

vants, or are spouses of the guru. They are not, however, qualified students. This is expressed by Gönpo Yeshe:

Those who are the spouses of the guru
And those who are students of the guru
Are both considered to be part of the retinue,
But what they wish to achieve is different.

Students who are worthy recipients must rely upon a fully qualified guru by joining pure faith and devotion. Jikten Sumgön Dorje said:

Definitely the only method for developing realization
is devotion.

He also said:

On the snow mountain of the guru's four kāyas† . . . .[143]

Dakpo Rinpoche commented:

As a method for realizing mahāmudrā,
There is nothing other than devotion.

The *Highest Continuum*[144] states:

The ultimate [truth] of those who are self-arisen
Is realized by those with faith.
The blazing light of the sun
Is not seen by those without eyes.

The sūtras say:

Once faith, which is like a mother, is cultivated as the
preliminary,
All excellent qualities are protected and increased. 42b

Lorepa observed:

In the beginning, one has contrived devotion.
In the middle, uncontrived devotion arises.
In the end, the guru dissolves into oneself.

The *Kālachakra Tantra* comments:

Even if throughout three aeons

You have made offerings to the three jewels
And have saved the lives of millions of animals,
You will not attain buddhahood in this lifetime.
If a guru, who is an ocean of excellent qualities,
Is pleased by your faith,
The supreme and common siddhis
Will definitely be attained in this very life.

The *Compendium of Trainings* says:

Having established the root of faith,
The mind will be stabilized in awakening.

It is said in the sūtras:

Faith enables one to pass beyond the activity of māras
And it confers the supreme path to liberation.
Intact seeds are the cause of excellent qualities.
Faith causes the tree of awakening to grow.

It is said in the *Salty River Sūtra*:[145]

During the last five hundred years
I will appear in the form of masters.
Think that they are me
And respect them at that time.

It is taught in many sūtras, tantras, and key instructions that realization arises quickly when you have faith and devotion. If, by joining faith and devotion, you meditate on guru yoga, immeasurable
43f
benefits accrue. The *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra]* says:[146]

Connateness, which cannot be expressed through any
 other [means],
Cannot be found anywhere:
It is recognized by relying on the timing and methods
 of the guru
And on your own merit.

And in the *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*:

Excellent students with respect for the guru
Should rely upon wise gurus at all times.

Why? The good qualities of the wise arise from them.

It is also said:

Without an oarsman,
A boat will not cross to the other side.
Even if you have perfected all positive qualities,
Without a guru, [cyclic] existence will not be brought
 to an end.

The *Arrangement of Samaya*[147] states:

Meditating for a hundred thousand aeons
On deities endowed with the major and minor marks
Does not compare with even a hundred-thousandth
 part [of the merit] of recollecting the guru for an
 instant.
To supplicate the guru once is better
Than a million recitations of approach and accom-
 plishment.

The *Approach to the Ultimate* comments:

For genuine students, the pure path
Comes from the teachings of genuine gurus.

The *Five Stages* observes:

When someone falls from the summit of a mountain,
They [keep] falling even though they think, "I will
 not fall."
When, through the guru's kindness, someone finds 43b
 the beneficial path,
They will be liberated even though they think, "I will
 not be liberated."

Nāropa said:

The guru is the treasury of all positive qualities.
The guru is the root of the entire dharma.

It is said in the *Great Display of Ati Tantra*:[148]

Individuals who meditate upon the kind guru

On the top of their heads, in the center of their hearts,
On the palms of their hands, or wherever,
Will possess the excellent qualities of the thousand buddhas.

Götsangpa remarked:

If you meditate on guru yoga,
Your faults will be purified and all positive qualities will be perfected.

He continued:

There are many generation-stage meditations;[*]
There is, however, nothing higher than meditating on the guru.
There are many recitations and chants;
There is, however, nothing higher than supplicating [the guru].
There are many completion-stage meditations;[†]
There is, however, nothing higher than completely entrusting yourself [to the guru].

In the songs of Yakde Panchen it says:

The most excellent generation-stage [meditation] is one's body as the deity.
The most excellent crown is the victorious ones of the five families.[†]
The most excellent completion stage is Yakde Panchen.[a]
The most excellent [ornament for] the top of the head is Rangjung Dorje.

A Sakyapa master said:

The supreme siddhi cannot be attained through supplicating anyone other than one's root guru. The common siddhis can be attained through supplicating other gurus. 44f

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a. Yakde Panchen's statement that, for him, the best completion-stage meditation is to meditate on himself means that he is resting evenly in his own nature, the nature of his own mind. (KTGR)

Shrīsaṃbhava's Biography proclaims:

Child of good family, bodhisattvas who are guided by spiritual mentors will not fall to the lower states. Bodhisattvas who are protected by spiritual mentors will not be influenced by negative companions. Bodhisattvas who are looked after by spiritual mentors will never turn away from the Mahāyāna dharma. Bodhisattvas who are guided by spiritual mentors will pass beyond the level of ordinary beings.

There are infinite teachings that [present] the limitless benefits of guru yoga meditation.

Further, it is said:

The guru is of the essential nature of all buddhas.

It is also said:

The guru is glorious Vajradhara.

And also:

The guru is the buddha, the guru is the dharma. . . .[149]

And:

The guru and the vajra-holder
Are not to be regarded as separate.

And:

Through whose kindness great bliss itself . . .[150]

And finally:

Prior to the guru . . .[151]

If you supplicate your root guru, regarding the guru as the embodiment of the three jewels, as the embodiment of the sources of ref-

44b uge, and as actually being the buddha Vajradhara, you will quickly receive blessings. If you take this as a yoga [practice] and rely upon [the guru], it is certain that all the supreme and common siddhis will manifest in an instant. The way to rely upon [the guru] is, as is said:[152]

> You should rely upon the guru through
> Offering, being respectful, serving, and practicing.

Moreover, no matter what type of activity the guru manifests—be it positive or negative—you should increase your faith, without allowing wrong views to develop. See everything the guru does as excellent by thinking, "The exalted guru has inconceivable methods for leading disciples in accordance with their natures, beliefs, and actions." Any commands he or she gives and all advice, [even] what is given as a joke or in jest—in brief, even if he or she says that fire is water or a hat is a shoe—should all be regarded as true, with the thought, "It is definitely so."

If you are able to accomplish the guru's wishes physically, verbally, or mentally, you should dedicate your life to doing so. If you are unable to actually accomplish them, you should make the sincere aspiration to be able to do so. Finally, you must generate the genuine devotion in which the guru's mind and your mind are mixed inseparably.

Since the guru has kept you in his or her heart, you should not
45f let the instructions he or she has given you go to waste. Generate diligence and put them into practice. With your mind "seized" by impermanence, you should exert yourself in developing such things as weariness [for saṃsāra] and being free from needs; you should [cultivate] renunciation, pure perception, devotion, love, compassion, and bodhichitta; and you should determine the meaning of the abiding nature† (*gnas lugs*), taking all these to heart.

However, there are those who are not like that. When their own wishes are satisfied, they exclaim, "O, precious guru," and say, "Whatever you do, whatever you say is right." Yet, if something does not accord with their minds in some slight way, they criticize the commands the guru gave for practicing the dharma. In the worst case they develop wrong views [about the guru] and leave [the guru] with a feeling of resentment. In a middling case, they ignore [what the guru has said] and are unwilling to accept anything from him or her. In the least case, they make the gesture of asking for [the guru's] permission, but only pursue their own aims in this life. They may say that they are staying in isolated places, but since their minds do not go towards the dharma and they do not reject the eight worldly qualities, they are even more ambitious than others. Because such people have many faults, they should not be considered as students or [appropriate] recipients of the dharma teachings.

[SUMMARY]

Gurus who have one of the aforementioned qualifications should cause those associated with them to practice the true dharma, without engaging in negative actions. They should plant the seeds of liberation and should be unsullied by lies or deceit. Gurus who are not like that, who, because they are puffed up with conceited
pride about being scholarly, well-disciplined, and virtuous, who 45b
have contempt for everyone else, who insist on being treated as someone important, who are quick to show pleasure over insignificant ups and downs, and who do not benefit the Buddha's teachings, should be treated with indifference. As Sakya Paṇḍita said:

> Those who do not act in accord with the Buddha's teachings
> Should be regarded with indifference even though they may be gurus.

Nevertheless, it is taught in the precious Kagyü tradition that even though a guru may be an ordinary being in bondage, if the student has the highest degree of devotion, in which [the guru is regarded as] an actual buddha, the blessings of the body, speech, and mind of all the buddhas will enter that guru in order to accept that faithful student; and such [a guru] will be able to manifest the activities of a buddha. Also, it is certain that if you have devotion towards and faith in any of the previous Kagyü gurus, that person will become your root guru and you will be able to receive his or her blessings. The exalted Gampopa, Düsum Khyenpa, Karma Pakshi, Shang, Yudrakpa, the exalted Götsangpa, and others have said, "A lineage of words is unnecessary. It is appropriate for us to follow this very lineage of meaning." Thus you should regard whichever

guru you have faith in as your root guru. It is certain that when you supplicate him or her, the wisdom of mahāmudrā—which is like a
46f clear, cloudless sky—will arise in your mind-stream through the force of their blessings.

Consequently, through knowing the benefits of practicing guru yoga and the defects of not doing so, you should meditate on the guru yoga.

[THE GURU YOGA PRACTICE INSTRUCTIONS]

Teaching Session 15 and Meditation Session 14

Develop bodhichitta by thinking, "For the benefit of all my mother sentient beings, I will attain unsurpassable buddhahood. In order to do that, I will meditate on and practice the guru yoga." Then cleanse and purify with "OṂ SVABHĀVA...." From within emptiness, generate yourself as whichever yidam you prefer, with the palace, seat, the complete form, and so forth, like the gathering of clouds. Or you can generate [yourself as the yidam] complete-in-the-moment-of-recollection.† Or if this is not clear, remain in your ordinary form.

Visualize on top of your head or in the sky in front, a precious throne supported by lions, on top of which are lotus, moon, and sun seats. Seated on this is your kind root guru, to whom you have entrusted yourself and from whom you have received instructions. The guru's form is that of the bhagavat great Vajradhara, who is
46b clear blue, has one face, and two arms. His legs are in the vajra position. He holds a vajra and bell in his crossed hands. With a lustrous and radiantly majestic form, he is smiling and is pleased. He is adorned with the thirty-two excellent major marks,† the eighty excellent minor marks,† and numerous silks and precious ornaments. His [form] appears yet lacks any inherent nature. All realms are complete within his form and his form pervades all realms.

Above his head are the Kagyü gurus, arranged one above the other up to Vajradhara [at the top], as well as the gurus of the practice lineages, who are gathered around like clouds. Think that they are surrounded by the limitless assemblies of yidams, buddhas, bodhisattvas, ḍākas, ḍākinīs, dharma protectors, and guardians.

[Offer] either an extensive or an abbreviated version of the

eight-branch prayer. Or recite the following:

> I pay homage to the glorious, genuine gurus,
> Who [abide] in Akanishṭha,† the palace of the dharmadhātu,†
> Who are the essence of the buddhas of the three times,
> And who directly reveal my mind to be the dharmakāya.
>
> I present praises and offerings of
> My body, wealth, and all imagined offerings.[153]
> I confess all my previous negative actions.
> I will not commit any further negative actions.
>
> I rejoice in the virtues of all beings,
> Dedicate these as causes for supreme awakening,
> Supplicate you to remain without passing into nirvāṇa, and 47f
> Request you to turn the wheel of the unsurpassable, supreme yāna.
>
> Please bestow your blessings so that I will
> Perfect impartial love and compassion
> And will directly realize ultimate, connate† wisdom,
> Just as the victorious ones and their sons and daughters have realized these.
>
> Bestow your blessings so that I realize my illusory body to be the nirmāṇakāya.†
> Bestow your blessings so that I realize my life-force to be the sambhogakāya.†
> Bestow your blessings so that I realize my mind to be the dharmakāya.
> Bestow your blessings so that I may realize the inseparability of the three kāyas.

This supplication was offered by the exalted Düsum Khyenpa to Dakpo Rinpoche. Next make any suitable offering, such as a maṇḍala. With immeasurable devotion, make the following supplication:

I supplicate the precious guru.
Bestow your blessings so that my mind abandons fixating on a self.
Bestow your blessings so that a state free from need arises in my mind-stream.
[Bestow your blessings so that nondharmic thoughts cease.][154]
Bestow your blessings so that I realize my mind to be unborn.†
Bestow your blessings so that delusion is purified in its own place.
Bestow your blessings so that all of existence manifests as the dharmakāya.

47b Then visualize that the surrounding gurus melt into light and dissolve into your root guru. Regarding your root guru as being of the essential nature of all the gurus, yidams, victorious ones, and bodhisattvas, make the following supplication:

> Genuine guru, please bestow the four empowerments† upon me.

Having supplicated in this way, an endless stream of nectar in the form of white light flows from the genuine guru's forehead. This dissolves into your forehead, purifying the obscurations of your body, empowering you to meditate on the generation stage as the path, and creating the good fortune for you to accomplish the nirmāṇakāya as the result.

An endless stream of nectar in the form of red light flows from the guru's throat. This dissolves into your throat, purifying the obscurations of your speech, empowering you to meditate on the completion stages of the nāḍīs, prāṇas, and bindus† as the path, and creating the good fortune for you to accomplish the sambhogakāya as the result.

An endless stream of nectar in the form of blue light flows from the guru's heart. This dissolves into your heart, purifying the obscurations of your mind, empowering you to meditate on the bliss of the four joys† as the path, and creating the good fortune for you to accomplish the dharmakāya as the result.

White, red, and blue lights, like a rainbow, radiate from the locations of the body, speech, and mind of the guru. These dissolve
into your body, speech, and mind, purifying the obscurations of 48a
your body, speech, and mind, empowering you to meditate on mahāmudrā, the inseparability of awareness and emptiness, as the path, and creating the good fortune for you to accomplish the svabhāvakāya† as the result. Thinking in this way, combine the recitation with meditation, and rest evenly as long as you can.

Again supplicate with: "Glorious, precious root guru...."[155] Then think that your root guru melts into light and dissolves into you. Think that the glorious guru's body, speech, and mind and your body, speech, and mind become inseparable. Within that state, rest evenly in mahāmudrā.

When [a thought] arises, seal [the practice] by dedicating the roots of virtue to great awakening and making pure aspiration prayers. Then enter into the activities of postmeditation.

By meditating on guru yoga in this way, all your faults and the two obscurations will be purified and the two accumulations will be perfected. The sixty-four excellent qualities of separation and maturation† will be perfected and in a single sitting you will manifest complete buddhahood, possessing the essential nature of the three kāyas. Therefore you should generate enthusiastic diligence for this.

[THE SIGNS]

As outer signs, immeasurable devotion and longing towards the
guru will develop. Even if the guru is nearby, you call out his or her 48b
name.[156] When you are in the guru's presence, you cannot bear to leave. Your mind is completely occupied with the guru; you have no thoughts other than the guru. Thus, inspired, you pass the day and night supplicating him or her without ever feeling it is sufficient.

The inner signs are that as soon as you remember the guru, [meditation] experiences blaze; external appearances become hazy and misty; your internal mind becomes naked clarity-emptiness; and the intermediate stream of thoughts is severed. Therefore the pointing-out instructions can be given during the preliminaries themselves.

The secret signs are that you may dream of meeting your guru, receiving empowerments, receiving dharma teachings, of light ra-

diating and gathering back, and so forth.

If these arise, no matter what happens, meditation will develop. If [an experience of] meditation does not begin during the preliminary practices, experiences and realizations will not arise; consequently, it is important to continue [practicing the preliminaries until the signs develop].

For those who have trained [in previous lives], the preliminary practices themselves will be the pointing-out instructions and shamatha will develop. At this point, the guru should examine [the students'] experiences.

Although these are given the name "preliminary practices," since they are the actual practice itself, the development of meditation or its lack of development depends upon them. If the essential point of these [practices] is not attained, it will seem that you are just rushing into the actual practice. You should continue with the preliminary practices until you have attained stability in them,
49r developed certainty, and the signs have appeared. Then gradually take up the actual practices.

THE FOUR SPECIAL PRELIMINARIES

C. THE FOUR SPECIAL PRELIMINARIES

This has four parts:

1. The Causal Condition
2. The Empowering Condition
3. The Object Condition
4. The Proximate Condition

1. THE CAUSAL CONDITION

Teaching Session 16 & Meditation Session 15

The cause [for mahāmudrā practice] is to be free from taking things to be real and to be without any attachments: to develop revulsion [for saṃsāra] and give up all activities. Therefore, the common preliminaries are presented first. Through the force [of your practice] of those, you recognize the difficulties in attaining this precious human existence with its leisures and opportunities. Having meditated on impermanence, [you understand that] this life is transitory, like the dew on the tips of grass. It will perish soon, which nothing can prevent—death will come without warning.

By reflecting that at the time of death[157] nothing will be of any help except the dharma, you [understand] that the wealth and pleasures of this life, the defeat of enemies, and the protection of relatives are pointless. By thinking that you will not be distracted even for an instant from accomplishing the aims for your next life,

your mind-stream will be tamed, and you will understand correctly the characteristics of saṃsāric phenomena. A feeling of disenchantment and weariness [with saṃsāra] will arise. Because of your intention to attain liberation, you do not have even a hair tip's worth of attachment to this life—what need is there to mention ordinary worldly activities?

You should give up everything, including what is related to the
49b dharma: listening to and reflecting on the dharma, giving explanations, chanting,[158] recitation, and so forth. Having cut off all external and internal distractions, remain in an isolated place and put aside all activities.

This is necessary because mahāmudrā [meditation] is what penetrates the vital point regarding the mind; consequently, if you pursue mental busyness and distractions, samādhi will not develop. Therefore you should practice in an isolated place.

2. THE EMPOWERING CONDITION

Teaching Session 17 & Meditation Session 16

Since the path that brings the realization of mahāmudrā depends solely on the guru, you must be guided by an authentic spiritual mentor. There are four types of gurus:

a) The Guru Who Is an Individual in a Lineage

b) The Guru Who [Appears As] the Words of the Sugata

c) The Guru Who [Manifests As] Symbolic Appearances

d) The Guru Who Is the Ultimate Dharmatā

a) THE GURU WHO IS AN INDIVIDUAL IN A LINEAGE

The first category is of those who [hold] the unbroken tradition of key instructions and meditations that have come from Vajradhara down to their root gurus. They are able to cause the development of special [meditation] experiences in the mind-streams of students and are able to open the door of knowledge for others in accordance with their realization of the view. Through recognizing that thoughts are kind and being able to transform whatever occurs into an aid for knowledge, they are able to prompt [students to do the same]. They are able to transform even unfavorable cir-

cumstances and discordant factors into favorable circumstances 50a
and positive qualities.

They understand that all delusion is [just] the delusion [created] by not recognizing thoughts. However, by knowing thoughts to be mind, they are taken as the path, which is the absence of delusion. Through recognizing thoughts in this way, [gurus] understand that phenomena are unobstructed, like a spear twirling through space. Thus they have the ability to open the door of knowledge.

A spiritual mentor endowed with these [qualities] should be sought out and relied upon with one-pointed faith and confidence. This accords with the words of Nāropa:

> The qualification of a guru is to belong to a lineage.

b) THE GURU WHO [APPEARS AS] THE WORDS OF THE SUGATA

Having received the guru's pointing-out instructions, certainty about your own mind develops within. By thoroughly examining the words of the Victorious One with respect, you determine whether your meditation on the instructions accords [with the Buddha's teachings] or not. You will [recognize] that there is no contradiction between [the guru's instructions and] the instructions of the greater and lesser vehicles; therefore, since the teachings [of the Buddha] have manifested as instructions, they are called a "guru."

To lack that vital point and to fixate on just some particular words and letters of the philosophical tenets of the greater and lesser vehicles, taking a [dogmatic] position as to what is or is not the case, or what is true or false, is an impure [attitude] that should be abandoned.

This is the correct way to rely on the guru who [appears as] 50b
the words of the Sugata.

c) THE GURU WHO [MANIFESTS AS] SYMBOLIC APPEARANCES

The earth is a spiritual mentor because it exemplifies the dharmadhātu, which is the ground that produces the excellent qualities of unchanging faith. Water is a spiritual mentor because it exempli-

fies the uninterrupted stream of diligence and the moistening of the mind-stream by the water of compassion. Fire is a spiritual mentor because it exemplifies the fire of knowledge, which burns the firewood of the mental afflictions, and the flames of wisdom, which dispel the darkness of ignorance. Wind is a spiritual mentor because it exemplifies the force of the winds of experience and realization, which disperses obscurations. Space is a spiritual mentor because it exemplifies being free from any limits and pervading everything.

There is nothing internal or external (such as the elements and what is composed of the elements) that is not a guru. Whenever you see appearances in this way with conviction—regardless of whether you analyze them or not—that is the way to rely on the guru who [manifests as] symbolic appearances.

d) THE GURU WHO IS THE ULTIMATE DHARMATĀ

Through directly seeing, realizing, and determining [the nature of] your own mind, which was unmistakenly pointed out by an au-
51f thentic guru, the suchness of all phenomena is realized. This is also a guru.

[SUMMARY]

Of these [four types of gurus], the guru who is an individual in a lineage is of foremost importance because, after he or she has pointed out the abiding nature [of mind], you will gradually realize the other [gurus]. Since experiences and realizations arise through meditating on [the guru's instructions], the second condition for practice—to be guided by an authentic spiritual mentor—is the empowering condition.

[GURU YOGA]

The way to practice this accords with [the instructions] given in the guru yoga section. If you wish to do this here, you should meditate on the gurus, arranged one above the other, in the following way: Visualize yourself as whichever yidam you prefer. Above your head, visualize your root guru, above whose head are all the gurus up to and including Vajradhara. Recite a seven-branch prayer and the four "Mother" verses.[159] Supplicate fervently for a long time,

[until] you are certain that your perception has been transformed.

If you wish to receive the four empowerments from the gurus, supplicate with strong faith and longing, saying:

> I supplicate you, exalted gurus:
> Please bestow upon me the four empowerments.
> Purify my four obscurations† and bring the four joys to perfection.
> Having brought the four kāyas to full manifestation,
> Bestow the siddhi of the four activities.

Visualize the gurus gradually dissolving one into another from the
top down and finally dissolving into your root guru. Regarding your 51b
root guru as the embodiment of all the gurus, receive from him or her the four empowerments in the following manner: Visualize that white, red, blue, and yellow lights come from your root guru's forehead, throat, heart, and navel, respectively, and dissolve into your four places. This purifies the obscurations of your body, speech, and mind, along with their latent tendencies. The wisdom of the four joys (joy, supreme joy, special joy, and connate joy) arises in your mind-stream and you receive the four empowerments. Think that the nirmāṇakāya vajra-body, the sambhogakāya vajra-speech, the dharmakāya vajra-mind, and the mahāsukhakāya become manifest. Finally, visualize the guru melting into light and dissolving into yourself and think that you are indivisible [from the guru], which is the vajra master empowerment. Conclude by dedicating all the roots of virtue. That completes the practice of guru yoga.

3. THE OBJECT CONDITION

Teaching Session 18 & Meditation Session 17

When one asserts that the various philosophical tenets—those of the tīrthikas or, within our own tradition, those of the Shrāvaka schools, the Chittamātra, the Madhyamaka, or of the kriyā, charyā, yoga, and anuttarayoga [tantras]—are not simply conceptual imputations, and when one fixates on a particular position, saying, "This is so; that is not," the force of solidifying† and fixating
on things as real obscures one's vision of the abiding nature. 52f

In this [presentation], what does not contradict those [philo-

sophical systems] and what is superior to them, is the nature of all-pervasive mahāmudrā. This is the primordial abiding nature, in which everything is complete yet which transcends everything. It is mind-itself† (*sems nyid*), the dharmadhātu, the self-state (*rang bab*), which exists free from the extremes of conceptual elaborations. Since this is precisely what is to be practiced, you should develop certainty about it.

Furthermore, the essence of mind is realized to be the three kāyas. There is the certainty that the mind realizing this is beyond conceptual identification† and is beyond being an object for the intellect (*blo*). All thoughts are mind-itself. Without being discarded, they are brought [onto the path] as the four kāyas. Since there is also no truly existent agent, they are brought [onto the path] as illusionlike. In brief, the object condition is to be unmistaken about what is to be practiced.

4. THE PROXIMATE CONDITION

Teaching Session 19 & Meditation Session 18

When meditating on the actual practice, do not think, "I am meditating on this," or "I will meditate," "I am meditating," "I was meditating." Do not harbor any hopes or fears, for instance by thinking that it is good if meditation arises or that it is bad if it does
52b not arise. Simply sustain the uncontrived ordinary mind† (*tha mal ba'i shes pa*) without obscuring it with positive or negative concepts. The proximate condition is to be free from hope and fear.

[SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL PRELIMINARIES]

The necessity for these as preliminaries can be illustrated by the way an eye consciousness arises. The causal condition is [a previous moment of] the eye consciousness. The empowering condition is the sense faculty of the eye. The object condition is a visible form, among all the instances of phenomena. The proximate condition is the just-ceased mental sense faculty. Through the coming together of these four, the eyes see forms.

In brief, the causal condition is to have revulsion for this life and worldly phenomena, to be without attachments, and to possess an attitude of true renunciation. The empowering condition is the four types of gurus previously explained and to be guided by a

genuine guru. The object condition is simply to determine the object of meditation without any confusion, thinking, "I will meditate like this." The proximate condition is to let the mind settle into itself† (*sems rang babs su bzhag*), which is of the nature of great nonconceptual wisdom, free from all [conceptualized] characteristics, such as an object of meditation and a meditator, and hope and fear.

You should practice in this way because, in the instant that these four come together, the special experiences and realizations of the actual practice and meditation will arise. These are the special preliminaries, called "the four conditions for practice." 53f

PART II

THE ACTUAL PRACTICE

A. Shamatha
B. Vipashyanā

Shamatha

A. Shamatha

This has two sections:

1. The General Explanation
2. The Detailed Presentation

1. The General Explanation

This has two divisions:

a) The Essential Points concerning the Body

b) The Essential Points concerning the Mind

a) The Essential Points concerning the Body

Teaching Session 20 & Meditation Session 19

Place your body in the seven-point posture of Vairochana (*rnam snang gi chos bdun*) as follows:

1. Sit cross-legged.

2. Place your hands in the position of meditative equipoise, resting them four finger-widths below your navel, and straighten [your arms], without bending your elbows.

3. Raise your shoulders, so that they resemble the wings of a vulture.

4. Bend your neck, pressing down on your Adam's apple with your chin, so that it resembles an iron hook.

5. Straighten your spine, so that it resembles an arrow.

6. Direct your gaze into space four finger-widths from the tip of your nose, without blinking or allowing [your eyes] to wander about.

7. Almost close your lips, leaving a slight space between your teeth, and rest your tongue on your palate.

Sit on a comfortable seat. This is stated in the *Vajra Garland Tantra:*[160]

> Practitioners should sit on a comfortable seat.
> Their gaze should be directed towards the tip of their nose,
> Resting in the area seen [just beyond] their nose.
> Their shoulders should be even, and their tongue and the palate joined.
> Their teeth and lips should be at ease.
>
> The movement of their breath should be relaxed.
> 53b They should sit properly in the vajra position,
> Without the least exertion.
> This is the posture [to adopt].

It also says:

> The posture for the body of the four elements†
> Should be free from the three faults:
> Being [too] comfortable, sprawling, or relaxed.

The reason for this is expressed in the *Hevajra Tantra:*[161]

> Great wisdom abides in the body:
> It has perfectly relinquished all thoughts,
> Is what pervades all things, and
> Abides in the body, [but] does not arise from the body.

The exalted Düsum Khyenpa commented:

> To see the mountain on the other side, you must look from the mountain on this side. If you want [to see] emptiness, you must resolve appearances.† If you want your mind to rest, you must hold your body in the meditation posture (*'khrul 'khor*).

There are infinite such sayings.

When you restrain your body (the support) in the meditation posture, the rambling thoughts of your mind (the supported) naturally cease. This can be illustrated by the following example: when the doors of a house (the support) are locked, the people inside (the supported) cannot get out. Similarly, when the mind dissolves into nonconceptuality, the connate wisdom of vipashyanā is also realized. To see this, the mind must be still. For the mind to be still, the body must be disciplined in the meditation posture. 54f

Since those [practicing] the Vehicle of Characteristics will not ascertain connate wisdom in this particular lifetime, they will not be able to attain buddhahood in this lifetime, with this body, but will be delayed for a long time. It is said in the *Sampuṭa Tantra:*[162]

> Through the practice of
> The eighty-four thousand sections of dharma,
> You will not know the suchness of the body.
> Thus all of that [yields] no result.

There is a story in the *Vinaya Scriptures*[163] about a monkey who, having seen a pratyekabuddha [practicing meditation], taught the essential points for the body to five hundred non-Buddhist ṛiṣhis.† This enabled them to attain the five supercognitions† and also the awakening of a pratyekabuddha.

In many of the key instructions it is said that when the body is straight, the nāḍīs are straight. When the nāḍīs are straight, the prāṇas are straight. When the essential points for the nāḍīs and prāṇas are held, the mind settles. If you meditate with a crooked body, your mind will not settle, no matter how much you try. The prāṇas are the mount for thoughts. When the prāṇas are controlled and move properly, your mind will settle.[a]

In general, there are two [techniques] taught by the Great Brahman [Saraha] and Nāropa: (1) mind controlling the prāṇas

a. In this sentence and the following paragraphs the words "settle" and "control" translate one Tibetan word, *zin pa*; they express the same principle in this context.

(*sems kyis rlung zin pa*) and (2) the prāṇas controlling mind (*rlung gis sems zin pa*).

1. Through resting the mind without contrivance, the whole
54b range of thoughts will be pacified in their own place. This is mind controlling the prāṇas.

2. Meditating that the guru is on the top of your head, supplicate for his or her blessings so that samādhi will arise in your mind-stream. Then [visualize that the guru] dissolves into you. Expel completely the stale, impure breath through your nostrils, meditating that the prāṇa expels illnesses, demons, and thoughts. Then hold the upper prāṇa tightly and let the lower prāṇa be natural. Direct your concentration in front of you and let [your mind] rest in its own state (*rang lugs*). There is no way that you will not be able to settle your mind. This is the prāṇas controlling mind. This is also what is meant by the saying, "By arranging the interdependent connections with the body, realization will arise in the mind."[a]

> In an extensive [presentation], this is Teaching Session 20 & Meditation Session 19. In an abbreviated [presentation], it is unnecessary [to make this a separate session].

[THE PURPOSE OF THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE BODY]

Teaching Session 21

The purpose of correctly holding the essential points for the body is as follows: Crossing your legs brings the downwards-expelling prāṇa[†] into the avadhūti,[†] pacifies the mental affliction of jealousy, and prevents obstacles. Placing your hands in the mudrā of meditative equipoise four finger-widths below the navel brings the water prāṇa[164] into the avadhūti and pacifies the mental affliction of aggression. Straightening your spine like an arrow and extending your shoulders like the wings of a vulture brings the earth prāṇa
55a into the avadhūti and pacifies ignorance. Bending your neck to-

a. Arranging the interdependent connections with the body (*rten 'brel lus la bsgrigs pa*): To meditate sitting in the correct posture. (DPR)

wards your chest slightly brings the fire prāṇa into the avadhūti and pacifies desire. Gazing four finger-widths from the tip of your nose with your eyes open and resting your tongue on your palate brings the wind prāṇa into the avadhūti, pacifies pride, and generates mental clarity.

The essential point for the mind [is based on] the prāṇas; the essential point for the prāṇas [is based on] the nāḍīs; and the essential point for the nāḍīs [is based on] the eyes. Thus the correct gaze is important.

The physical posture of meditative concentration (either the five-point or the seven-point posture) pacifies the five poisons[†] naturally, and brings the prāṇas and mind into the avadhūti of their own accord. Thoughts stop on their own; a light openness (*'bol shig ge*) and vibrant lucidity (*dangs sing nge*) manifest; and realization arises quickly. Therefore the essential points for the body are important.

If you do not maintain these essential points—if your body is leaning or crooked in some way—thoughts will proliferate and your mind will not settle. If you lean to the right, initially you may experience clarity, but later mundane aggression will arise, and there is the danger that you will be afflicted by king-demons[†] and the like. If you lean to the left, at first you may experience bliss, but later strong desire will arise, and you will be afflicted by nāga demons, classes of female [demons], and their kind.

If you lean forward, at first nonconceptuality may arise effortlessly, but later this will change into ignorance, and you will be af-
flicted by earth-lord demons[†] and their kind. More specifically, 55b
many problems associated with the disorder of the life-force prāṇa[†] may develop, such as thinking that two people whom you see walking together are criticizing you, or having a feeling of unhappiness. If you lean backward, at first you may effortlessly experience emptiness, but later this will change into a mental affliction, like pride, or superstitious thoughts about the demons mentioned above will arise. In particular, you may develop such problems as being unable to rest your mind, having a proliferation of thoughts, becoming physically thin and sallow, or releasing the dhātu [i.e., bindu].

The essential points that do not cause any problems and that perfect all good qualities are the essential points concerning the body. Consequently, a flawless meditation posture is important.

THE FIVE-POINT POSTURE OF MEDITATIVE CONCENTRATION

Guru Shang explained the five-point posture of meditative concentration (*bsam gtan gyi chos lnga*) as follows:

> There are five essential points concerning the body: (1) to be straight like an arrow; (2) to be bent like an iron hook; (3) to be crossed like lattice work; (4) to be bound like an iron chain; and (5) to be tightened as [represented by the syllables] *ḷi* and *ṛi*.[a]
>
> 1. "To be straight like an arrow" means that your spine should be straight like an arrow. This is illustrated by the example of trying to straighten a [bent] arrow. If you just pull [the ends] straight out, you will not straighten it. You [must push] forcefully on the crooked part to straighten it. In the same way, you
> 56f should straighten up from your waist, stretching the three creases on the lower abdomen. The purpose is to let the three nāḍīs† abide in their own places. By straightening the avadhūti, the nāḍī knots are loosened and the prāṇas can easily enter the avadhūti.
>
> 2. "To be bent like an iron hook" means that your neck should be bent just slightly in a natural way. The purpose is to close the left and right nāḍīs, which are like the open mouth of a fish through which the prāṇas and thoughts move. This will give rise to nonconceptuality.
>
> 3. "To be crossed like lattice work" means that your ankles should be crossed. The purpose is to be a substitute for the vajra position and to prevent obstacles.
>
> 4. "To be bound like an iron chain" means that your knees should be held tightly with a vajra knot† or meditation belt.† The purpose is to maintain correctly the essential points concerning the body.

a. The vowels of the Sanskrit syllables *ḷi* and *ṛi* (ऌ ॠ) look like a hook. The image of the hook refers to pulling up the lower prāṇa by closing the lower door. (KTGR)

> 5. "To be tightened as [represented by the syllables] *ḷi* and *ṛi*" means that the lower door should be closed forcefully by placing a cushion under your buttocks. The purpose is to create bliss and heat quickly through the meeting of the nāḍīs and prāṇas.

The exalted Marpa Lhodragpa said about these five essential points concerning the body:

> My five essential points for the body are an even greater instruction than all the instructions in Tibet put together. If you wonder why, it is because 56b
> through [practicing] my five essential points for the body that the prāṇas enter the avadhūti of their own accord. This causes chaṇḍālī† to blaze on its own from the navel, thereby causing bodhichitta bindus to fall naturally from the head. This gives rise to bliss spontaneously. You will not need to block thoughts deliberately—nonconceptuality will arise effortlessly. With that, the wisdom of realization will arise automatically.

Therefore, in the beginning, the positioning of the body is important. When you have become accustomed to this [posture] over a long time, the internal elements will be equalized. This will bring long life, and it will cure old illnesses and prevent future ones. Because the pure essence (*dangs ma*) of the nāḍīs and prāṇas is strengthened, the heaviness of the upper body will not disturb the lower part [of the body]. When the nāḍīs, prāṇas, and bindus become a unified collection, you will not be uncomfortable sitting [in meditation] for months or years. When the pure essence of the bindus fully matures, the realization of self-luminous awareness will arise without effort.

b) THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE MIND

Teaching Session 22 & Meditation Session 20

Do not dwell on the past. Do not anticipate the future. Rest evenly in the present mind, clear yet nonconceptual.

The past has ceased—it is finished and gone. There is nothing 57f

to think about. The future has not arrived; it does not exist; it cannot be an object. It is futile to investigate it.

If you analyze the present,[165] it cannot withstand being dissected into many past and future moments because it does not exist as a real thing. Since it is beyond being an object for the intellect and cannot be expressed through thought, it does not involve even the slightest stain of the apprehension of characteristics† (*mtshan 'dzin*), such as [being conceived of as] being something or not being something, existent or not existent, good or bad. Therefore, you should rest—in a "nonresting" manner—in the fundamental state, a state of clarity-emptiness, free from fixation† (*gsal stong 'dzin med*).

The reality (*don*) of the abiding nature, which is mahāmudrā, does not depend on whether the elaborations of the three times are cut through or not. Nevertheless, when beginners start to meditate, if they do not interrupt the conceptual mind-stream that conceives of the three times, samādhi will not develop. Therefore, when the instructions for meditation are being put into practice, it is important that [students] be guided in this way.

[QUOTATIONS: THE WAY TO REST THE MIND]

Teaching Session 23

When bringing the mind to rest, if you tighten [your concentration] too much because you want your mind to settle quietly, that will be a catalyst for thoughts. Therefore, at the beginning you should think, "I am going to rest in meditation," only as an impe-
57b tus. During the actual practice, you should not have the thought of intending to meditate; do not even think, "I am meditating on the preliminaries." Rest relaxed (*lhug pa*) within a gap, an opening (*had de phyad de*), without any conceptual fixation.

Having become accustomed to that, do not be distracted during the four daily activities† from that state of clarity-emptiness free from fixation. To begin with, you should to try to sustain nondistraction only for the amount of time it takes [to eat] a mouthful of food, swallow a sip of tea, recite one round of the MAṆI† [mantra on a mālā], or stand up and take two or three steps. When you have become accustomed to this, train in resting in unwavering clarity-emptiness free from any fixation no matter what the occasion: whether your circumstances are good or bad, whether you are surrounded by many people or only a few. The meaning of this was described by the exalted Gampopa:

> Do not dwell on the past. Do not anticipate the future. Let the present mind rest quietly (*tsen gyis*) in its own natural state. "Do not dwell on the past" means our minds should not pursue previous thoughts. "Do not anticipate the future" means our minds should not anticipate the next thoughts. "Let the present mind rest quietly in its own natural state" means that we should not conceive of the present as anything. As is said: [166]
>
> > When the mind is not altered, it is clear.
> > When water is not disturbed, it is transparent. 58f
>
> Rest quietly and freely in a state beyond contrivance. By resting like that, a vibrant, crisp (*sing nge ye re ba*) clarity without concepts will arise for as long as it takes to snap your fingers, milk a cow, and so forth. [Simply continue to] meditate, without regarding that lasting for a long time as an asset or its lasting for a short time as a problem. After that, when a thought arises, relax with it and rest. Of relaxation (*glod*) it is said:[167]
>
> > If the mind-itself that is twisted into knots
> > Is loosened, it is undoubtedly liberated.
>
> By relaxing and meditating like that, when clarity devoid of thoughts lasts longer, you will be absorbed within the essence of your own [mind]. This is known as "the flowing river of samādhi."

Dakpo Rinpoche expressed the intention of Ḍombī Heruka in the following manner:

> Just as water is transparent when it is not disturbed, rest without contrivance. Like the sun unobstructed by clouds, let the six sense consciousnesses† rest in their own state without impeding them. Rest without

distraction at all times, during all activities.

The exalted Götsangpa taught:[168]

> It is said:
>
> > Rest loosely (*lhod de*) in a state of nonexistence.
> > Rest without fixation in transparent openness (*yal le phyad de*).
>
> 58b The mind is not found through searching. It is not seen by looking. If examined, it is [found to be] nonexistent. If grasped at, it cannot be held. If dismissed, it does not go. If placed, it does not stay. If mixed, it does not blend. It cannot be split through division. It cannot be parted by separation. It is not known through looking. It is not realized through explanations. It cannot be illustrated by any example. It cannot be arrived at through any [means]. No matter what name it is given, it is not contradicted.
>
> If you wonder how this is practiced: Do not intentionally think and do not deliberately not think. Do not remain in indifference. Do not let thoughts go their own way. Do not follow the arising of your feelings. Do not bring in the adulteration of reasoning and examination. Do not take outer emptiness—the nonexistence of objects—to be a thing.† Do not regard inner emptiness—the nonexistence of a self—to be a nothingness. Do not regard conceptual movement, which is rootless, to be a problem. Do not fall into the partiality of fixating on appearances or fixating on emptiness.
>
> Do not pursue[169] the past. Do not anticipate the future. Do not solidify the present. Let your mind soar (*phyal le*) without fabrication. Let it be loose (*shig ge*) without effort. Let it be spacious (*khres se*) without a reference point. Let it be open (*bun ne*) without any grasping. Let it be vibrant (*sing nge*) [within] its nonarising.† Let it be transparent (*thal le*) [within] its unceasingness. Let it illuminate (*gsal le*) without obscu-
> 59a ration. Let it balance (*khad de*) within equality

> without setting objects apart as something [separate] externally, or mind as something [separate] internally. As was said by Saraha:
>
> > If the mind-itself that is twisted into knots
> > Is loosened, it is undoubtedly liberated.
>
> He also said:
>
> > Leave the uncontrived mind in freshness. The contrived mind will not achieve the paths of noble beings.†
>
> By leaving the mind in its own uncontrived state, coarse thoughts will cease. Experiences of clarity-emptiness will arise. You will remember your guru's kindness, you will feel happy, and your mind will turn away from saṃsāra.
>
> This is called "shamatha" (*zhi gnas*, calm abiding).[a] *Shi* (calm) means that mental afflictions are pacified. *Nay* (to abide) means to abide in that nature. This is samādhi (*ting nge 'dzin*, meditative stabilization). *Ting-nge* means unmoving and *dzin* (to hold) means not letting go.

The unborn Shang gave these instructions:

> It is said that the elaborations of the three times must be cut through. This means: Do not consider the past. Do not consider the future. Do not even consider the present. Rest loosely by relaxing (*lhod kyis glod*) into [the mind's] own nature with awareness, free from contrivance.
>
> If you do not know how to relax, your mind will not reach its natural state and wisdom will not dawn. For example, someone bound in shackles has only one thought: escape. If they were not bound, they would not be concerned with escaping. Similarly, if 59b
> you try to hold your mind, it will scatter. If you do not

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a. Shamatha was translated into Tibetan as *zhi gnas*, pronounced *shi nay*.

hold onto it, it is impossible for it to scatter. Therefore, let your mind relax.

In that very instant of relaxation it is impossible for the mind not to be clear yet unimpeded (*gsal la ma 'gags pa*), sharp (*hrig ge ba*), open (*phyad de ba*), transparent (*yal le ba*), and utterly empty (*stong sang nge ba*).

He continued with:

In brief, do not think about previous thoughts. Do not think about those to come. As for the present: When you think, "A thought arises," look directly at the instant of present thought. This will decisively cut through its movement. As long as you remain undistracted, thoughts will not arise. When you become distracted and a thought suddenly arises, accept that thought and look directly at it. It will be liberated in its own place, and [an experience of] nonconceptuality will expand. Therefore, accept whatever thoughts you have and look directly at them.

Do not make your sessions long. Suspend them while [your mind] is still clear. Do short, frequent sessions.

And:

[Sit] on a comfortable seat in the vajra position along with the other [points for the posture], but do not meditate on mahāmudrā. Likewise, do not deliberately meditate on anything such as a nonarising [state], freedom from elaborations (*spros bral*), transcendence of the conceptual mind, a lack of [inherent] characteristics, a nonreferential [state] (*dmigs med*), a focus,
60a or any characteristics.

However, you may wonder, "What should I do?" The essential points are as follows: Do not move your body. Do not close your eyes. Do not dwell on past thoughts. Do not anticipate future ones. Immediately recognize the instant of a present thought. In the instant of looking at the present thought there is the simultaneity of cause and result: its characteristics are

liberated in their own place—this is the way things are (San. *dharmatā,* Tib. *chos nyid*). By looking repeatedly at thoughts as they arise, at some point you will immediately recognize a thought. At that moment there will be liberation.

The instant of immediately recognizing a thought is called "the realization of mahāmudrā." It is called "samādhi arising in the mind-stream" and "the development of meditation." That instant of recognizing a thought overcomes and purifies all the negative actions accumulated in beginningless saṃsāra.

And further:

As is said:

Yogins and yoginīs: set your mind free,
Like a fool watching over cattle.
Rest without attachments, like a dog's corpse.
Rest without desires, like a leper.

Yogins and yoginīs: let your mind be loose,
Like a Brahman skilled in spinning threads.
Rest without any grasping, like a human corpse. 60b
Rest without mindfulness, like a lunatic.

Rest within the unceasing [state], like the sky.
Rest with clarity, like a crystal sphere.
Rest without artifice, like a child.
Remain relaxed.[170]

These express the way to rest your mind.

When resting that way, the abiding mind is simply left with awareness or the mind does not stir at all; therefore there is a calm state of resting. When that occurs, recognize the settled mind.

You may think that prior to this you were only involved with thoughts. To begin with, you should practice resting your mind in that way for short sessions often. Then you should extend the length of time that you meditate. Later, when you have become accustomed to this, you will be able to remain [in

meditation] in any situation. [Engaging in] the four daily activities will not make a difference [to your meditation].

When the experiential signs of the resting mind have manifested, direct your attention to them. In that moment a sense of peace will arise. You will develop confidence in yourself, feel happy, and mentally very blissful. You will not want to do anything else. You will often long to meditate.[171] Your mind will be
61f lucid (*dwangs pa*), joy will arise frequently, and you will yearn to stay in isolated places. Certainty about the instructions will arise, and you will repeatedly feel respect for your guru. You will experience sadness for saṃsāra and think, "I must meditate. Nothing else is of any use at the time of death." You may also think, "I am happy to have accumulated the merit that [enabled] me to meet with these teachings." There is an endless [variety of] such [experiences] that can arise.

It is said that "shamatha suppresses."[a][172] It is also called "the settled mind" (*sems zin*), and "mind resting or not moving towards objects."

The siddha Orgyenpa said:

> I was told that mahāmudrā meditation is the actual practice that purifies adventitious stains (*glo bur gyi dri ma*); therefore, when the path has been completed, the so-called "adventitious stains" will be banished. Having requested these cherished mahāmudrā instructions, I was told, "There are no instructions not included in those. You must apply the key points of practicing Tilopa's six dharmas."
>
> I requested these cherished oral instructions in order to practice them. The explanation of these oral instructions is as follows: It is said, "(1) Do not reflect. (2) Do not think. (3) Do not speculate. (4) Do not

a. Shamatha suppresses (*zhi gnas kyis mgo non*): Shamatha practice is known for its ability to suppress thoughts, confusions, and mental afflictions. (DPR)

> meditate. (5) Do not analyze. (6) Rest in the nature 61b
> of mind."
>
> 1. "Do not reflect" refers to the past. Dwelling on the past is the cause of dualistic thoughts. Since practice does not depend on the past, the meaning of this point is "do not dwell on the past."
>
> 2. "Do not think" refers to the present. Fabricating anything in relationship to the present corrupts the ground of what is to be practiced and [causes] meditative equipoise to be overpowered by [adverse] circumstances.[a] This is like letting a stranger into your home. The meaning of this point is "do not be involved with contrivance or adulteration."
>
> 3. "Do not speculate" refers to not anticipating the future. Anticipating the future or rejecting and adopting[173] [anything in meditation] is [like] revealing the secret of your practice. You will be unable to settle into a recognition of the actual practice.[b] The meaning of this point is "do not reveal your secrets to the enemy."
>
> 4. "Do not meditate" is in reference to emptiness. If you meditate on the entire world—the environment and its inhabitants—as being a partial emptiness,† like a vase being empty of water, you will not realize the meaning of the abiding nature. The meaning of this point is "leave appearances in their own place."
>
> 5. "Do not analyze" is in reference to an object of concentration. Analysis of a focal object cannot transcend its characteristics, the conceptual mind, or mental phenomena—no matter how excellent or superlative [the object]. The meaning of this point is 62f

a. The present—the present mind—is the ground for your practice. It is what is to be practiced or meditated on. (DPR)
b. You will be unable to recognize the abiding nature of mind. (KTGR)

"do not analyze the designated object."

6. "Rest the mind in its own place" is in reference to the basic fundamental state. To fabricate anything—such as wishing for [the basic state] to be something excellent—is a waste, no matter what you do. The basic nature [of mind] on its own is brilliant (*gsal le ba*), sharp (*hrig ge ba*), naked (*rjen ne ba*), vibrantly lucid (*dangs sing nge ba*), vividly clear (*gsal ye re ba*), and expansive (*a phyad de ba*). It is beyond any name that one could give it and yet there is no contradiction in giving it any name. It is dharmatā, which is beyond being an object of expression. Let this tranquil (*'bo ltos se ba*) [mind] rest blissfully as much as possible in its own reflexive awareness† and clarity (*rang rig rang gsal*). The meaning of this point is "do not strain in any way."

These six dharmas contain all the methods for sustaining [the experience of] mahāmudrā. If you are able to practice these essential points, there will not be any place for adventitious stains to remain.

He also said:

In the beginning, the primary method for bringing the mind to rest is devotion to the guru. Next it is important to hold the essential points concerning the body and the gazes correctly. In addition, the methods for placing the mind are as explained by Saraha:[174]

62b If let loose, it rests firmly without moving.
I have realized that [to do] the reverse would be to be like a camel.[a]

If you think, "I must hold the mind-itself so it does

a. If a mother camel is tethered and her young are let loose, she will always strain to be free. However, if a baby camel is tethered and its mother let loose, the mother will always stay nearby. In the same way, the mind should not be restrained. (KTGR)

not get lost," that form of thinking is itself a condition that will provoke thoughts. For example, if a person on arriving somewhere is told, "The local authorities say that you are not allowed to go anywhere else," even if they had [intended] to stay for the day, the situation would make them feel that nothing could be less suitable than to comply with this arduous request. They would think, "I must get out of this," and would make plans to escape. If the authorities, however, had not said anything, they would have been happy to stay for as long as possible.

Therefore, without putting your mind to work, be relaxed and loose (*lhod kyis glod*). In a state that is simply free from distraction, do not meditate on anything and do not fabricate anything: rest relaxed (*lhod de*), loose (*shig ge*), and at ease (*'dos se*). Be spacious (*gu yangs*), free from hope and fear and all concerns. [While remaining] in that state, do not dwell on the past and do not anticipate the future. Rest in the present, without contrivance or hope and fear. Having cut through all external conceptual elaborations, do not stray [into regarding] the appearances of mind as being external.

Even the thought, "The development of medita-
tion is good, its lack of development is bad," will 63a
cause thoughts to proliferate. Therefore, in a state free from an object of meditation and a meditator, let your mind be free (*rang yan*), open (*had de*), and loose (*shig ge*). At that moment your mind will rest in its own nature. As Saraha said:

If the mind-itself that is twisted into knots
Is loosened, it is undoubtedly liberated.

To rest without contrivance, having cut through the elaborations of the three times, is the best way to bring the mind to rest.

If you do not rest like that,[175] but are motivated by high expectations, are disturbed internally by thinking about an object of meditation and a medita-

tor, do not properly maintain the essential points concerning the body or the gaze, and do not tame your mind-stream through the force of devotion, although you may sit still, your mind will not want to stay put.

In general, it is the characteristic of the mind that if you try to grasp it, it cannot be held; if you try to send it away, it does not go anywhere. If you do not know to relax right within the mind itself by recognizing the abiding nature of the characteristics of hope and fear, meditation will not develop.

Tilopa[176] advised:

> Put aside all physical activities: rest leisurely in the natural state.
> Do not express anything verbally: sounds are empty, like echoes.
> 63b Do not mentally contemplate anything: behold the ultimate (*la zla'i chos*).
> The body has no essence: it is like a bamboo stalk.
> Mind is like the center of space: it transcends being an object for thought.
> Without adding to or removing [anything] from that state, rest at ease.

And he continued:[177]

> Do not do anything with the mind: be free from all striving.
> It is self-arisen and self-pacified, like ripples on the water.[178]
> If you do not rest, do not focus, and do not pass beyond the reality (*don*),
> [Mind] will not stray from samaya: it will be a lamp in darkness.
>
> If you are free from striving and do not abide in extremes,
> You will see all the teachings of the piṭakas[†] without exception.
> If you immerse yourself in this reality, you will be liberated from the prison of saṃsāra.

> Resting evenly in this reality burns up all negative actions and obscurations.
>
> This explanation is referred to as "the lamp of the teachings."

And further:[179]

> Cut all connections involving attachment or aversion for your country or companions,
> And meditate alone in the woods or remote mountain retreats.
> Remain in a state of no-meditation,
> And when the nonattainable is attained, mahāmudrā is attained.

It is said in the *Mind at Rest*:[180]

> In the beginning, rest relaxed and loose.
> To remove what stains meditative concentration,
> In the middle, look, staring sharply (*hrig ge ye re*).
> To mix meditation and postmeditation,
> In the end, even [everything] out.
>
> Do not investigate what has happened or anticipate what will come. 64a
> Without holding onto the present, rest in space.
> Cut through the coming and going of thoughts of the three times.
> In this way, rest in samādhi free from thoughts.

In the *Amulet-box Mahāmudrā*[181] it is taught:

> Earnestly supplicate the guru on top of your head. Then relax your body—[beginning with] the muscles and nāḍīs in your four lower limbs[a]—and remain in a state free from effort. This is letting the body settle

a. The muscles in four lower limbs (*nya bzhi*): The calf and lower arm muscles. These are referred to specifically because when they are relaxed, the other muscles in the arms and legs will relax. (DPR)

into itself (*lus rang babs*).

Do not deliberately open or close your lips and do not say anything. This is letting speech settle into itself (*ngag rang babs*).

Be free from any thought of intending to meditate with a [particular] gaze and do not even think, "I am meditating on the preliminaries." What remains is a gap, an opening (*had de phyad de*). This is letting mind settle into itself (*sems rang babs*).

While in that state [of mind settled in itself], the remaining gap (*had de*) is like a god giving rise to passion.[a] This is the determining factor for the first preliminary.[b] It is called "ordinary mind" and also "original mind" (*dang po'i sems*). It arises at times for all beings, such as when they relax after hard work; but since they do not recognize it, they wander in saṃsāra. Now you should recognize this at all times. No matter what you are doing—whether you are eating food or holding something in your hand, like a mālā—you should stay in this remaining gap, using the gaze of an elephant.[c]

64b Similarly, no matter where you are looking—to your right or left, or into space—initially, [your experience] will be pervaded by clarity-emptiness without fixation, as when your vision has become "numb."[d] The first preliminary[182] arises naturally, and you recognize it, thinking, "This is it." Rest in the gap.

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a. Passion arises nonconceptually in the desire realm. (DPR)

b. Remaining in a gap (*had de*) is the preliminary of the proximate condition. (KTGR) (See The Special Preliminaries page 88.)

c. The gaze of an elephant (*glang po che'i lta stang*): To look about in a panoramic, expansive way, calmly and directly, without being restless. (DPR)

d. Vision becoming "numb" (*mig sprid chil*): This is when your eyes still see things clearly but there is no conceptualization of the objects. There is a "numbing" of the relative dualistic process that usually takes place. (DPR)

Moreover, [you should also remain] within this gap while going for a walk or using the toilet. [If you can do so,] then even if you are surrounded by your parents, siblings, or hundreds of others [while using the toilet], you will not feel nervous or embarrassed. Remain undistracted within clarity-emptiness without fixation during any[183] of the four daily activities, which include sleeping, standing, and sitting. This is expressed in the *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra:*

> Be fully alert [while] moving, walking, sleeping, and sitting.
> When walking, look just a yoke's [distance away] and your mind will be free from delusion.

In brief, on all [occasions]—when talking, chanting sūtras, reciting mantras, and listening to or explaining the dharma—do not be distracted from the gap of clarity-emptiness free from fixation.

It is important to take these stainless teachings of the exalted Kagyü forefathers earnestly to heart and practice them.

2. THE DETAILED PRESENTATION

This has three parts:

a) Settling the Mind That Has Not Settled

b) Stabilizing the Settled Mind

c) Enhancing the Stabilization

a) SETTLING THE MIND THAT HAS NOT SETTLED 65f

This has three sections:

i) Concentrating Using an Object

ii) Concentrating without an Object

iii) Concentrating on the Breath

i) Concentrating Using an Object

This has two divisions:

(*a*) Concentrating on Something External

(*b*) Concentrating on Something Internal

(*a*) Concentrating on Something External

This has two parts:

(i) Concentrating on Something Impure

(ii) Concentrating on Something Pure

(i) Concentrating on Something Impure

Teaching Session 24 & Meditation Session 21

When concentrating on something large, hold the gaze and the essential points concerning the body properly. Focus your gaze and attention one-pointedly on whatever naturally appears as a visual object in front of you, such as a pillar, wall, or mountain. Rest evenly without allowing your mind to wander towards anything else.

When concentrating on something small, hold your mind on either a small piece of wood four finger-widths in length or a small pebble [placed] in front of you.

If you tighten [your concentration] upon the focal support too much, that will act as a catalyst that will provoke thoughts; therefore, you should let [your mind] settle into itself. Without thinking about any other object, rest on the focal support—undistracted and totally relaxed. Do not think about its color, whether it is thick or thin, long or short. [Let your mind] simply relax undistracted in its own place, without severing the tether of mindfulness.

65b Because the focal support is merely a cue or reminder to be undistracted, simply direct your gaze unwaveringly towards it and relax. This is [merely a method for] placing [the mind]; you are not meditating upon the focal support itself.

When you have gotten fully into the session, if the focal support begins to vibrate or move, or you cannot see, or[184] your eyes become "numb," stop completely. Do not look at the focal support; instead look [up slightly] into space at the level of your eyebrows and let your mind relax into its own state. At this point, do not take any reference point for meditation—just remain undistracted. Rest still[185] in vibrant, lucid awareness (*rig pa dangs sing nge ba*), unveiled by dullness or sluggishness. This point is expressed by Tilopa:[186]

> When mind is without reference point, that is mahāmudrā.
> When you are accustomed to and familiar with this, unsurpassable awakening is attained.

[Quotations: How to Rest]

Teaching Session 25 & Meditation Session 22

If, when bringing your mind to rest, you tighten too much in the hope that it will rest quietly, be vividly clear, and delightfully blissful, or if you tighten too much, fearing that thoughts will proliferate, these [efforts] will create a situation that will prevent the mind's resting. Therefore, it is important to rest lightly and freely (*'bol shig ge*), without having any hope or fear at all. The unborn 66f
Shang taught:

> In mahāmudrā meditation, realization does not occur through fabricating, concentrating on an object, striving, or effort. It is said:
>
> > Whenever there is any desire or effort, there is no awakening.
>
> Also:
>
> > When the mind is not altered, it is clear.
> > When water is not disturbed, it is transparent.
>
> And further:
>
> > If the mind-itself that is twisted into knots
> > Is loosened,[187] it is undoubtedly liberated.

In order to put aside all mental and physical effort, rest without activity. Rest without contrivance. Rest

> freely. Let go and rest. Rest loosely. Rest without thinking or not thinking. Rest without an object. Rest without a reference point. Rest, settled in [mind] itself. Rest comfortably. Rest without any striving. Utterly nonconceptual experiences, not produced through effort, will dawn.

He continued:

> The mind in mahāmudrā meditation has no reference point at all. Without any striving, rest mind quietly—relaxed and loose, just as it is.
>
> If you know how to be relaxed like that, nonconceptual clarity will dawn, like the pure expanse of space. Do not regard its lasting a long time as a good
> 66b quality or lasting only a short time as a fault. By sustaining this [nonconceptual clarity] in meditation for just an instant, at some point[188] you will recognize the nature of thoughts; once thoughts have arisen as luminosity, there is no doubt that [nonconceptual clarity] will manifest fully without interruption.[189] You will arrive easily at the flawless realization of the buddhas.

The exalted Götsangpa said:

> To sum up the practice of mahāmudrā, it is nothing more than this: Begin by supplicating the guru. Then the guru dissolves into you, and his or her mind and your mind mix like water poured into water. Within that state, rest your mind in freshness.
>
> Do not be hopeful that meditation will develop or be anxious that it will not. Let your mind remain however it happens to be. Rest without meditating on emptiness and without fixating on objects. Rest without a reference point, without the striving and wishing for a very blissful or vividly clear state. Rest expansively (*cham me*) without any reference point. Do not collect the mind inwards: open it up[190] and rest. Do not give the mind work to do. In general, rest in openness (*phyad de*)[191] without fixating on anything at all.

Dakpo Rinpoche instructed:

> 67a When looking at your own mind, do *not* regard resting peacefully (which is the emergence of a blissful samādhi) as an asset, or its absence as a problem. Place your mind without distraction. When you are not distracted, thoughts never arise. When they do manifest, look at them: [you will see that] in the beginning thoughts do not arise; in the middle they do not abide; and in the end they do not cease. They are free from the limitations of being a thing (*dngos po*), being an entity (*ngo bo nyid*), or being conceptually identifiable.

The exalted Tilopa[192] stated:

> Rest relaxed in the uncontrived intrinsic state.†
> When the bonds are relaxed, there is liberation without any doubt.

He continued:[193]

> Cut through the root† of your own mind: rest in naked awareness.
> Allow the water [of mind] clouded by thoughts to clear.
> Do not block or encourage appearances: leave them as they are.
> When there is no adopting or rejecting, appearances are liberated as [mahā]mudrā.[194]
>
> Since the all-basis† is nonarising, it is free from veiling obscurations and habitual tendencies.†[195]
> Do not be involved in self-centered concerns: rest in the unborn essence.
> Appearances are reflexive appearances† (*rang snang*): bring mental phenomena to exhaustion.

It was said by Götsangpa:

> Whenever another thought arises,
> Recognize its essence immediately,

And relax right within that.
It will undoubtedly be liberated in its own place.

According to the instructions of the siddha Orgyenpa:

67b To rest in uncontrived freshness (*ma bcos so ma*) means: Rest without tension (*lhod de*), like a Brahman spinning thread. Rest unrestrained (*shig ge*), like a bundle of hay whose strap has been cut. Rest lightly (*'bol le*), as if you were trampling on fleece.

> On the other hand, even though you may bind yourself, like a silkworm in its cocoon, or force your body and mind together, like a person gathering wood on a steep rocky ledge,[a] your mind may not want to remain [still].
>
> Within a state free from an object of meditation and a meditator, simply post the watchman of nondistraction, without taxing your mind. Let [your mind] be free to go where it will and, like a loose mother camel [returning to] her tethered calf, it will come back to its own place. The essential point for concentrating the mind is this single profound point: know how to relax in a state of nondistraction without meditating.

These [instructions] should be practiced with all the meditation sessions [presented in this section]. You should simply look at the essence of whatever thought arises and rest [within that] without any contrivance. It is important to rest in a state of total relaxation, without being bound by adopting or rejecting, hope or fear.

[CONCENTRATING USING AN OBJECT: ADDITIONAL TECHNIQUES]

Teaching Session 26 & Meditation Session 23

68f Concentration on a candle flame that is two finger-widths in height should be practiced according to the instructions given by

a. When people go to collect wood on a steep ledge, they have to cling tightly to the rock or they will fall. This illustrates trying to force the body and mind together. (DPR)

Dakpo Rinpoche:

> Place a candle to the side where it will not be blown by the wind and will be reflected clearly in a flawless mirror [that is in front of you]. Direct your attention to that brilliant, steady image.

Or you can concentrate on [an area of] empty space about the size of the palm of your hand, the size of a shield, the size of the interior of a house, the area within a valley, as much as your eyes can see, or what extends throughout the billion-world system.†

Alternatively, you can concentrate on a white bindu[a] about the size of a pea [visualized] at the point between your eyebrows, where there is a triangular-shaped bone, since this is the place where the consciousness gathers.

Without examining the size, dimension, or color of these focal supports, let [your mind] settle into itself. Although these three objects—a candle flame, space, and a bindu—can be presented together in one meditation session, you should concentrate on whichever is clearest and apply yourself to that.

(ii) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING PURE

Teaching Session 27 & Meditation Session 24

It is said in the *King of Samādhi Sūtra*:[196]

> The Protector of the World is beautiful in all ways, 68b
> With a body like the color of gold.
> Those who rest their minds upon his image
> Are called "bodhisattvas in meditative equipoise."

As is taught, concentrating on the form of the Tathāgata increases your excellent qualities beyond all measure. Therefore, concentrate on it in the following way: Visualize in front a lion throne, with lotus, moon, and sun seats upon it. [Seated there] is the true, perfect Buddha, Shākyamuni, with a color like molten gold. He has one face and his two hands are in the earth-pressing and meditative-equipoise mudrās. He is adorned with the thirty-two excellent major marks and the eighty excellent minor marks, and is

a. Bindu (*thig le*): In this context, a dot or sphere of light.

resplendent in the three dharma robes, which are red, like the clouds at dawn. Seated with his legs in the vajra position,[197] radiating light, and endowed with all the supreme aspects, he is peaceful. Think that he is teaching you the dharma with great pleasure. As is said:

> Whoever brings the Buddha to mind,
> Before that person the Sage sits.

Since this is certain, you should have confidence in the thought, "The Teacher himself is seated before me." Thinking that you are fortunate to behold and bring to mind the form of the Victorious
69f One, give rise to strong faith and respect. Without being distracted by any other thoughts, direct [your attention] one-pointedly to that [form] and concentrate.

When dullness, sluggishness, or drowsiness arises, concentrate on his crown protrusion (San. *ushṇīsha*), his hair-tuft[†] (*ūrṇā*), or his entire face. If your mind becomes scattered or agitated, concentrate on either his navel area, the soles of his feet, or the edge of the throne. When you are free from dullness or agitation, direct [your attention] to his whole body or the glorious knot[†] (*shrīvasta*) at his heart center. If your mind still will not rest, you should mentally enumerate the excellent major marks, directing [your attention] to them from top to bottom and then bottom to top.

(*b*) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING INTERNAL

Teaching Session 28 & Meditation Session 25

In the center of an eight-petalled lotus at your heart, generate whichever yidam you prefer through the five phases of complete awakening,[†] the three phases of ritual,[†] or the complete-in-the-moment-of-recollection [methods of generating a deity].[a] Or, if you prefer, meditate upon your guru.

If your mind is unable to rest on [the yidam's] face, arms, and so forth, concentrate on a sphere of brilliant white light that is the essence of that [yidam or guru].

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a. These three ways of taking birth in the maṇḍalas mirror the three ways of taking birth in saṃsāra. See respective glossary entries. (DPR)

The point of these [meditations] is what is known as "tying the elephant of mind to the pillar of the object with the rope of mindfulness." The *Ornament for the Sūtras* says: 69b

> By relying on a reference point
> A nonreferential state fully develops.

ii) CONCENTRATING WITHOUT AN OBJECT

Teaching Session 29 & Meditation Session 26

Concentrate on the great emptiness[†] of all inner and outer things all at once. Or gradually dissolve the elements one into another, and rest evenly within a state of great emptiness, luminosity, without an object. At this point, special signs and appearances, such as visions or pleasant sounds, may manifest. However, it is said:

> If you do not, from your depths, turn away from attachment,
> Even good meditation experiences can disguise the intrinsic state.

This being so, it is important not to be attached to such [experiences], but to seal them with [a recognition of their being] illusionlike.

iii) CONCENTRATING ON THE BREATH

Teaching Session 30 & Meditation Session 27

Hold the vase breath (Tib. *rlung bum pa can*) and direct [your attention] to it. Or, if you are unable to hold the vase breath, count your breaths (taking each inhalation, pause, and exhalation as one) building up from twenty-one, to eighty-nine, to one hundred, and so on. Place your attention one-pointedly on your nostrils, 70f
without letting it wander anywhere else.

[SETTLING THE MIND: ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS]

Teaching Session 31 & Meditation Session 28

If many thoughts arise in a continuous stream, do not regard this as a problem. Instead, meditate enthusiastically, thinking, "No matter how many thoughts arise, let them come." Be mindful of their

movement and identify them—do not just let them go free. By resting in their groundlessness,† thoughts themselves become the support for concentration and are liberated in their own groundlessness. Thus resting develops.

At this point, do not be distracted even for an instant: be like someone threading a needle or a swordsman engaged in battle. Do not allow your mind to waver, just let it go where it will: be like a bird flying from a ship[a] or the ocean without waves. Make no effort: be like a garuḍa soaring in space[198] or an expert [trainer] guiding an elephant. Apply these points in all instances of shamatha practice.

During these [practices], you can motivate yourself with the thought, "I will concentrate my mind." During the actual practice, you should set the watchman of mindfulness to examine your mind-stream carefully, thinking, "Is my mind resting or not? Is it
70b dull or agitated?" If you see that your mind is resting in its natural state, remain there undisturbed. [However,] if you are unable to rest, apply the methods that correct either the fault of dullness or of agitation. These methods should be learned from the oral [instructions of a guru].

When meditating, in the beginning, one session should be equivalent to one inhalation. Then gradually lengthen your sessions. If, however, you prolong your sessions in the beginning, the object [of meditation] may become unclear and muddled and you may have problems associated with discouragement. Therefore, beginners should do short, frequent sessions. Take your break [when you have been resting] within sharp, lucid clarity (*gsal dangs ngar dang bcas pa*), and repeatedly continue your meditation [in this state]. Do not leave your meditation hating it—suspend it when it is going well. It is important to apply yourself in ways that create enthusiasm [for meditation].

[The Three Levels of Resting]

Teaching Session 32

Three levels of resting (*gnas pa gsum*) will develop gradually

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a. A bird that flies from a ship in the middle of an ocean will always return to the ship.

through meditating upon the key instructions for settling the mind that has not settled.

At first, the mind will seem not to rest firmly upon the object. This is just the beginning [of resting]. Then, when your awareness has become somewhat more lucid, if it seems that thoughts have increased, they have not. Thoughts have [always] been arising but,
since you were not meditating before, you did not notice them. 71a
Now, because your mind is resting evenly and your awareness is more lucid, you notice them. By leaving thoughts [alone]—without trying to dam them up [or] chase them down—you will be able to recognize each one, without being carried away by the undercurrents of thoughts.†

When you do not need to keep your sessions short, when your awareness seems to be sparklingly clear (*sbun si li lir*), and when the flow of your meditation is uninterrupted, then you have reached the first level of resting called "like water falling from a mountain cliff." If you feel as if you are being swept away in the midst of swirling water falling from a steep mountain, that is not it. If it seems that you are watching this [falling water] without attaching any importance to it, that is it.

By looking [at thoughts] in the way described above, their [number] will decrease and they will become a nonconceptual state. Sometimes a thought will pop up suddenly, but since it does not continue, it disappears like snowflakes falling on a hot rock.

When you notice the details and quantity of thoughts as they manifest, and the flow of your meditation is continuous, you have reached the middle level of resting called "like a slowly flowing river." If you feel as if you are sitting far away [from the river] and cannot see it flowing very well, that is not it. If you feel as if you are sitting on its bank watching it, that is it.

By maintaining [your meditation] as described above, the flow 71b
of [both] subtle and coarse thoughts will cease and you will rest still (*me re*), within nonconceptuality. Your body may feel comfortable or you may not notice its existence. The movement of your breath may cease or you may not notice it at all. Your experiences of bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality will expand. During postmeditation, if you do not examine [things] carefully, you will not be able to discern the details of objects, and [even though] your mind is not involved in distractions, it may seem that you have become

more forgetful. Even when you are not meditating, your meditation expands.

When lucidity manifests as an experience of vivid (*me re ba*) clarity, without any highs or lows, like the center of a clear, cloudless sky, you have reached the final level of resting called "like an unmoving ocean." If it feels like an ocean at night, that is not it. If it feels like an ocean during the day, that is it. Since this is the actual practice of meditative concentration, if you continue [to practice], the supercognitions and so forth will arise, and this will act as the basis for seeing the truth.

When any one of these three levels of resting develops, you will be able to recognize the essence [of your mind] with the pointing-out instructions. You will feel enthusiasm [for practice] and cut through superimpositions.[†] [As long as the levels of resting] have not developed, [even] if you receive the pointing-out instructions, you will long for those [levels of resting] and your practice will be chaotic.

The first level of resting is unable to foster full confidence. There is no way that those who receive the entire set of instructions once will not develop at least the middle level of resting.
72f Once these two levels have developed, if the third level does not, meditate on the key instructions for stabilizing the settled [mind].

[REMARKS FOR GURUS]

[Students] should be questioned about how these experiences first develop and, on the basis of their answers, they should be taught[199] how to remove faults and how to enhance their practice. However, [if they are taught] initially [that these levels of resting] will arise as was just described, there is the danger that some will lie, saying that they have arisen when they have not, or that others will simply engage in intellectual speculation. Therefore, you should compare [the students'] intellectual understanding with their experiences and present this teaching session [accordingly].

If the signs and sequential development of the three levels of resting have not manifested, instruct [the students] to apply themselves to [the practices found in] the previous meditation sessions. Do not present this teaching session. This applies as well to the following [sections] on removing hindrances, enhancing practice, and questioning [by the guru].

b) STABILIZING THE SETTLED [MIND]

This has two parts:

i) Holding the Mind

ii) The Nine Methods for Bringing the Mind to Rest

i) HOLDING THE MIND

This has three sections:

(a) Holding Above

(b) Holding Below

(c) The Yoga of Alternating

(a) HOLDING ABOVE

Teaching Session 33 & Meditation Session 29

Visualize in the middle of a four-petalled white lotus at your heart center a white bindu—white like mercury, sparkling, shiny, and spherical—about the size of a pea. Breathe in. As you exhale, visualize that the bindu exits through the opening of Brahmā and settles high up in the expanse of space. Meditate for a long time with 72b
your physical posture drawn upwards, your gaze elevated, your mind uplifted, your awareness intensified.

This is called "the samādhi of the crown ornament of Mahābrahmā," and is the best preparation for the samādhi where the mind concentrates on Akanishtha.

(b) HOLDING BELOW

Teaching Session 34 & Meditation Session 30

[Visualize] in the middle of a black upside-down four-petalled lotus at your heart center a black bindu about the size of a pea or whatever seems appropriate. [Visualize] this spiraling down—as if it were a spider's thread—and exiting through the secret place. It [moves] slowly downwards[200] until it is finally many miles below, where it settles with a heavy quality. Rest your mind one-pointedly on this. Contract your anal sphincter and [let] your physical posture and gaze gradually settle downwards. This is known as "the

samādhi of experiencing below the earth."

(c) THE YOGA OF ALTERNATING

Meditate alternating these two techniques according to your particular state of mind: if it is [too] elevated, bring it down, and if it is [too] low, uplift it. This will cause one-pointed samādhi to arise and will correct any problems.

73f ### ii) THE NINE METHODS FOR BRINGING THE MIND TO REST

Teaching Session 35 & Meditation Session 31

What are the nine methods for bringing the mind to rest? The nine methods for bringing the mind to rest, taught by the Bhagavat[†] in the precious sūtras, are:

1. Placement (*'jog*)
2. Continuous placement (*kun tu 'jog*)
3. Definite placement (*nges par 'jog*)
4. Thorough placement (*nye bar 'jog*)
5. Taming (*dul bar byed*)
6. Pacification (*zhi bar byed*)
7. Thorough pacification (*nye bar zhi bar byed*)
8. Creating a single continuum (*rgyud gcig tu byed*)
9. Even placement (*mnyam par 'jog*)

1. [Placement] is to place [the mind] by directing one-pointed attention to a given object.

2. [Continuous placement] is to bring [the mind] to rest for a long time by extending the duration of that [resting state].

3. [Definite placement] is to place [the mind] in equipoise by instantly recognizing thoughts with mindfulness.

4. [Thorough placement] is to place [the mind] in equipoise by blending that evenly resting mind with the previous resting state.

5. [Taming] is to generate joyous enthusiasm and rest within

it by recollecting clearly all the excellent qualities of the resting mind.

6. [Pacification] is to rest [the mind] by being certain, and identifying which conditions stimulate which [thoughts] and counteracting any fixation to them.

7. [Thorough pacification] is to bring about self-liberation 73b
through recognizing either the essence of the causes of distraction (covetousness and so forth), or the essence of the result of distraction (feelings of mental unhappiness and so forth).

8. [Creating a single continuum] is for the mind to settle naturally on the object through the force of meditating as described, and to rest there without relying upon strenuous effort.

9. [Even placement] is, in the end, not to be distracted [by concerns] about either resting in meditative equipoise or not resting.

These are the nine methods for bringing the mind to rest.

[THE REMEDIES FOR DULLNESS AND AGITATION]

Teaching Session 36

In all instances of mental concentration, you should set the watchman of mindfulness to determine whether there are the faults of dullness, sluggishness, and so forth. If there are none, just remain in that state. When those are present, you should correct them. Those [particular] faults and the general ones of the mind not resting and meditation not developing are caused by: (1) not remembering impermanence and death; (2) not equalizing the eight worldly qualities; (3) not giving rise to authentic devotion; and (4) being idle and lazy. The root[201] [of all these faults] is not abandoning fixation on a self.

The remedies for these are [respectively] to: (1) generate wea-
riness [for saṃsāra] and swiftly sever entanglements with this life; 74f
(2) turn away from any attachment to saṃsāra, that is to say, to equalize the eight worldly qualities; (3) supplicate the exalted guru from the depths of your heart and generate devotion; and (4) develop perseverance in meditation. It is important to meditate on

bodhichitta, cherishing others more than yourself. In particular, the methods for correcting meditation faults are, as is said:

> The three faults in meditation are: dullness, sluggishness, and agitation.
> For dullness, meditate somewhere cool,
> Sprinkle yourself with water, or simply imagine that you do so.[202]
> For sluggishness, let the cool air from a window strike you.

When your mind is dull (*bying ba*), sit somewhere elevated where there is an open view. Stretch backwards, straighten your spine and, with intensified awareness, direct your eyes to a distant mountain peak. Either actually sprinkle yourself with water or visualize that you do so. Moreover, meditate that your guru is in the space in front, and supplicate him or her earnestly with forceful awareness. Sit in a cool place and wear light clothing. Meditate for short sessions. Generate sadness and renunciation [for saṃsāra]. Do not eat or drink a lot and do not sit in a hot place or in the sun. Do strenuous yogic exercises. From time to time take breaks and go for a walk, but do not let your mindfulness lapse. Also practice "the samādhi of the crown ornament of Brahmā" that was ex-
74b plained above. If you do these things, dullness and sluggishness will be corrected and your mind will arrive in its natural state.

When your mind is agitated (*rgod pa*), relax, eat nourishing food, get a massage, and wear warm clothing. Place your mind as much as you can on whatever focal support you prefer. Take breaks from time to time.

If you are not able to do this and [thoughts] proliferate, examine them to see whether they are nondharmic or dharma-related. If they are of the first type, investigate whether they are thoughts related to enemies, or relatives, or wealth and possessions. No matter what you are thinking, [your thoughts] are pointless. Though you may externally tame your enemies, there will be no end to them if you do not inwardly tame your own mind-stream. Though you may protect your relatives, it will all be meaningless if you do not protect your [meditation] experiences and realizations. [Remember,] wealth is impermanent and momentary, like a rainbow in the sky. Thus, it is meaningless to be preoccupied with any of these things.

Remember that those of us who have entered the Buddha's teachings do not simply change our physical appearance: we must not engage in any mental distractions or nondharmic activities at all.

If your [thoughts] are the second type, recall that [it is said] that to be concerned with listening or reflecting or [becoming] scholarly, well-disciplined, and virtuous, thinking, "I will do this and that," is also pointless. As is said: 75f

> The [fruit of] the perfect Buddha's teachings
> Will not be accomplished by merely listening to them.

It is also said:[203]

> By means of mantra recitation, the pāramitās,
> The vinaya, sūtras, abhidharma,† and so forth,[204]
> And the different major texts and tenets,
> Luminosity-mahāmudrā will not be seen.
> Luminosity is not seen by striving; that obscures it.
> Conceptually held vows and samaya [also] impair the [true] meaning.

This was stated by Tilopa.

If you are bound by the eight worldly qualities because of not remembering death and impermanence and not turning your mind from saṃsāra, it will be impossible for you to be considered among those who are scholarly, well-disciplined, and virtuous. Abandon such efforts and thoughts. Instead think, "I will rest my mind in its own place according to the key instructions of the guru." Determine that thoughts are meaningless and remain one-pointedly in samādhi. Also practice the visualization of "the samādhi of experiencing below the earth" that was explained above.

Dullness is not sleepiness, but rather the absence of clear awareness. Sluggishness (*rmugs pa*) becomes the drowsiness of heavy sleep. In such a state, the movements of thought are not noticed and good and bad meditation experiences are not distinguished. 75b

The remedies for these include the previously [explained] visualizations and activities, or sitting by a window so that the wind hits you. Since dullness and sluggishness are caused by having slandered the gurus and three jewels in previous lifetimes, to remove

[this negative karma] you should make confessions in the presence of the special representations,† and also apply yourself to such [practices] as confessing your negative actions through the meditation on Vajrasattva and the recitation of his hundred-syllable mantra. You should also clean stūpas, perform prostrations, make offerings, and so forth.

Another [approach] is not to seek an external remedy for dullness and agitation, but, by looking directly at their essence, to recognize them as your own mind. Or if you realize that mind is emptiness free from elaborations, you do not need to reject the dull or agitated mind—it dawns as wisdom. If you do this, your mind will certainly settle.

Now the three experiences of bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality may arise, and you might think, "Meditation has developed. I am a realized being." Nevertheless, as is said:

> If you do not supplicate the exalted [gurus],
> And do not, from your depths, turn away from attachment,
> Even good meditation experiences can disguise the intrinsic state.

To foster meditation, you should supplicate with devotion and reverse your attachment to this life and, in this regard, it is important to wander from one mountain retreat to another. Meditation that
76f does not generate devotion lacks a head, and meditation that does not reverse attachment has no feet. A body without a head or feet is useless.

Through the force of the experiences of bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality, you will turn away from attachment to the sense pleasures. You will not need to eat. You will not notice the movement of your breath. A feeling of great joy will arise as you think, "This is the realization of the buddhas." You will have strong certainty in the thought, "The guru is the Buddha." The defiled supercognitions, magical powers, and so forth will arise. However, you should not have attachment towards them.

If you sustain the experience of one-pointedness for a year, the subsequently attained realization will be stable. Those with the highest degree of stable shamatha will not notice the movement of their breath or the presence of their body. Those of the intermediate degree will only notice them on examination. Those of the lowest degree will not be disturbed by the movement of their breath or the weight of their body.

c) ENHANCING THE STABILIZATION

Teaching Session 37 & Meditation Session 32

First, direct your attention one-pointedly to whatever form is clear and appears as a visual object, [regardless of] whether it is something positive or negative. Once it is clear, direct [your attention] to all the forms that you can see. When [your attention] is stabi-
lized on those, take whatever arises as a focal support and rest one- 76b
pointedly on it—be it sounds appearing as objects for the ears, smells for the nose, tastes for the tongue, tangible objects for the body, or phenomena for the mind. Specifically, you should direct [your attention] one-pointedly to whatever thoughts manifest as objects for the mind—whether they are concepts to be abandoned (such as the five poisons, desire or aggression) or concepts to be adopted (virtues such as generosity) or neutral concepts—and then rest on those.

Some assert that the concepts to be abandoned should be forcefully blocked. However, since that [will provoke] more thoughts, it will be difficult for samādhi to develop. Therefore, no matter what thoughts arise, do not view them as faults. Rest still, relaxed and loose, right within those [thoughts]. Without severing the tether of mindfulness, let thoughts come as they will. Without letting even one get away, recognize each and every moment [of thought]. Then take a short break.

By meditating like that, once thoughts themselves have become a support for concentration, their stream will be interrupted, and serene resting (*gnas pa me re ba*) will develop. If that does not occur and your thoughts continue to multiply, without regarding them as a problem, sustain nondistraction. Through doing this, there will be no difference between looking at the observed object as you did before and looking at thoughts now. This is the best way to concentrate the mind. It is said in the *Ornament for the Sūtras*:

> Engaging properly 77f
> With desire itself and the others,
> Brings liberation from them.

> Likewise, it [creates] renunciation of them.

The *Hevajra Tantra*[205] says:

> Desire binds the world,
> And yet that very desire liberates it.

Gyalwa Yang Gönpa also expressed this point:

> Do not regard the thoughts in your mind as things to
> be rejected.
> Do not deliberately create nonconceptuality.
> Post the watchman of mindfulness, and rest.
> There will come a time when you arrive right within
> shamatha meditation.

It is important to continue doing short sessions. Alternate between tightening [your concentration] (*sgrim pa*) and relaxing (*glod pa*).

Tightening means to concentrate intently on whatever the object is,[206] without allowing [your mind] to be distracted for even an instant. Your mouth, eyes, and ears should also be "intensified" (*krong*), and even the limbs of your body should be taut. Meditation with the proper amount of tension is analogous to trying to identify a thief in a marketplace or count horses from afar. You should tighten [your concentration] as if you were crossing a river on a bridge made of a single plank or carrying a pot full of melted butter.

Relaxing might seem to mean that all efforts in meditation are
77b to be cast away. In fact, it is not a case of casting [anything] away. Just completely let go into an unfabricated state, the absence of a self, and, for brief moments, simply be mindful without wandering. Lengthen your sessions a little and relax your body and mind from within. This can be illustrated by the following examples: the mental ease [felt] once work is over; the relief [experienced] after an illness has cleared up; a sheaf of hay when its rope is cut; a small child with a full stomach; the sun and moon free from clouds; or a candle flame without wind.

These two points correct the faults of dullness and agitation respectively.

[General Instructions for Removing Hindrances and Enhancing Practice]

Teaching Session 38

It is not necessary to teach the following points from A to L in the given sequence or in a literal way. Nevertheless, the appropriate points should be taught according to [the students'] experiences, realizations, intellectual understanding, and so forth in order to remove their hindrances and enhance [their practice]. Having questioned [the students] in the manner presented above, you should determine what signs have developed [as indications] of the level of their mind-streams and give them the appropriate teachings.

It is perfectly proper not to explain [these points] to those who are not genuinely practicing, who simply want the credentials of having received [these instructions]. If it happens that you must present [this section] because you are persistently [requested to do so], you should only give this as a reading transmission, straight-through, in a way that [permits] only slight comprehension. If you were to explain this in detail, describing from the beginning the way [the experiences and realizations] develop, those who are knowledgeable in the dharma may go astray by becoming jaded; and later, when others give them instructions, they may be hindered [by having already heard an explanation].
Therefore, you should recognize [the students'] abilities and the [particular] period [of their development] and teach [accordingly]. 78a

A) Some people desire wonderful experiences in meditation, so they meditate while fabricating special [experiences of] clarity-emptiness, which are conceptually created. This is called "rainbow-colored meditation" (*sgom 'ja' tshon ma*). This happens if the pointing-out instructions have been given too early. Such meditation will not serve.

If you are [instructing] those who are teachers or those who wish to be someone knowledgeable in the dharma (*chos rgyus can*) and [your instructions] do not accord with their flowery descriptions [of their experiences], they may become displeased and engage in a meditation of their own invention (*bcos sgom*). This is a great hindrance and as such is of no use. It is analogous to being unable to get to the top of the stairs because one has not started at the bottom.

To correct this hindrance, you should tell them to curtail their strivings, not to meditate with expectations, not to fabricate mentally, and to maintain an ordinary state in a relaxed way. Tell them, "[Your way] will only lead to worse things. I promise[207] you it

will not improve."

B) Some people who have received the pointing-out instructions too early think that, because [the instructions are that] the mind is the buddha and that they should rest without contrivance, their uncontrolled thoughts (*rnam rtog rgya yan*) are the buddha. They hope for this [to be the case] with their wild thoughts (*rtog pa tho co*) and hope for experiences through their liquor. These people are worse than the previous ones.

You should tell them to generate fortitude and armor[-like diligence], to meditate without wandering for even an instant, not to [use] high dharma expressions, and to exert themselves in the actual implementation of practice.

78b C) Others may have had good meditation, but if they leave it without sustaining it, this is known as "disowning one's meditation."[a] You should tell them [to continue] to meditate, prolonging[208] those [experiences] with increased diligence.

D) For some people [meditation] goes well at times, [yet] later, because of their obscurations, they become depressed. [Although] they [continue to] practice by imitating their previous [meditation], nothing happens. Things get so bad that if they work too hard they develop "gathering of the dhātu."[†] If they [work] less, they become stuck in their hopes for a comfortable dharma [practice].

You should tell [these students] that, when times are bad, they should not desire them to be good. They should sustain [their practice] by looking into the bad experiences themselves. It is easier to sustain [practice] with the bad than with the good. Through developing confidence in this, they will develop a powerful [practice].

E) Some, as soon as[209] they are resting evenly, feel uncomfortable, as if they need to change something. If they get lost in trying to alter this state or in the undercurrents of thoughts, things get worse. You should tell them that if they look at this uneasiness without altering it, it will loosen easily, like knots being undone.

a. Disowning one's meditation (*sgom bdag [po] med pa*): Means not to take care of one's meditation, not sustaining it, like ignoring one's possessions and allowing them to deteriorate. (DPR)

F) Others do not notice the movement of their thoughts and think they are not distracted. [However,] at some point they think, "I have been thinking for quite some time. It's not good that I didn't notice this." They then pursue those previous [thoughts], sum- 79a
moning (*bkug*) them back, and claim that they are resting in meditation.

You should tell them that these [thoughts] do not come from anywhere other than the "summoner" (*'gugs mkhan*). The summoner itself is conceptual. Although there is recognition, it is doubly deluded. This is called "iron hook meditation" (*sgom lcags kyu ma*).

G) Sometimes people notice when their thoughts are active and at that moment they think, "They are empty," and shout PHAṬ for each one to send it away. This is worse than [just having the thoughts].

[You should tell such persons that] the best [thing to do] when they notice that they are thinking is to look immediately at the very mind that thinks, "I am distracted." Even if they are unable to do that, they should not feel guilty about pursuing [thoughts]; whenever they are mindful, they should rest in a state of total relaxation. This will bring liberation, just like the untying of knots.

H) Some stop [meditating] when they are simply undistracted. For others, relaxation is like waiting for a fish, which is called "not noticing the thief of thoughts: scattering and agitation." Their problem is that they are too relaxed. You should tell them that it is important to intensify their awareness.

I) For some people, tightening their [concentration] becomes[210] an effort, and it may seem as if they are [bound] to something or are binding their body and speech. You should tell them that it is important to alter this by relaxing.

J) For others it seems that whenever they remember some places or

79b persons these [things] arrive right within their minds. They think that somehow the object they see is present now, but when they look at it without fabrication, it disappears. Along the same lines, if there is a noise or they feel an itch, their mind goes there. Others will clearly remember some unimportant thought. Or they think that the object they see remains quietly (*lhan ne*) there.

[Tell] all of these [students] that the best [thing to do] is to look directly at wherever their awareness has gone, and it will be self-liberated. Even if that does not happen, they should shorten their sessions and rest repeatedly, totally relaxing and loosening up (*shig bshig*).

K) The consciousnesses are like a monkey. If a monkey is put in an empty house, he will run from one window to another, imitating people. Likewise, when the eyes see a form, thoughts run after it and imitate it. Similarly, [thoughts] run after and imitate the impressions (*tshor*) of sounds, tastes, smells, and tangible objects.

[Tell students] that if they recognize this and rest right within it, they will quickly attain mastery. They should be subtle in this, as if they are recognizing the movements of a tip of a hair.

In this regard, some may say, "I don't know how to do such things,"[211] and just let [their thoughts] go uncontrolled for a long time.[212] From time to time they may make an artificial meditation out of looking at an observed object. This is called "holding mindfulness as supreme" and a "conceptually fabricated meditation."

80f Most of today's great meditators do this. They should be told not to engage in mental fabrications or contrived meditations, but to rest evenly in one-pointedness.

L) [Tell students] that by noticing thoughts—which are called "scattering and agitation"—they will disappear without a trace, like drops of water falling into water. If awareness arises immediately through being mindful of fluctuating [thoughts], which are like down-feathers blown about by the wind, [thoughts] will not matter.

These can also be [methods for] correcting the hindrances and enhancing the development of shamatha.

If it is necessary [to present this], it is teaching session 38.

[THE SUPREME WAY TO REMOVE HINDRANCES AND ENHANCE PRACTICE]

Teaching Session 39

The best way to remove hindrances and enhance [practice] is to rely upon devotion. Those with superior devotion have superior meditation; those with middling devotion have middling meditation; and those with inferior devotion have inferior meditation. If there is no devotion at all, meditation will not develop. Here [in the practice of mahāmudrā], the quality of your meditation depends upon the degree of your devotion; therefore, it is important to combine supplication from the depths of your heart with devotion.

When beginners start to meditate, it is important to keep meditation sessions short. At first, one inhalation and exhalation of the breath is a session. Later, when [the sessions] are extended, it is important to leave [the meditation] enjoying it. If your experiences were good at the end of your last retreat, they will be good as 80b
soon as you begin the next one. The same [will be true] with bad [experiences]. It will be like that for the sessions as well.

If you lose yourself to laziness at the beginning of a retreat or a session, they will get worse and become increasingly difficult. In the end, it will be hard to correct this. If you keep your practice short at the beginning, it will be easy to meditate throughout your retreat and sessions, and you will end on a good note.

As for directing [your attention] to an object: No matter what object you focus on, you should direct [your attention] to it for as long as it is clear and you are resting one-pointedly. If it is not clear, bring the object of focus vividly [to mind] and, thinking, "I am going to meditate like this," keep it in mind. Rest relaxed without contrivance.

Through the force of the key instructions for concentrating the mind, the mind will thoroughly rest. Although this is called "shamatha," since the conditions for thinking were not encountered, you are simply being idle. It is not considered to be a type of samādhi. Because this also occurs for those who are stupid by nature, like sheep, it is not a pure [samādhi].

If, through the power of yoga, you attain a one-pointed mental state for an instant, a day, month, year, or until the end of an aeon, it is suitable to refer to this as one of the various levels of lesser, in-

termediate, or greater shamatha samādhi.

81f "Shamatha" (*zhi gnas*, calm abiding) means that the characteristics of mental afflictions and thoughts are pacified (*zhi*), and the mind abides (*gnas*) one-pointedly on what is virtuous by nature. The cause of shamatha is to be firm in your ethical conduct. Its nature is to be isolated from thoughts that involve mental afflictions. Its conditions are that it develops from a special resting of the mind. Its benefits are that coarse mental afflictions and sufferings are suppressed.

VIPASHYANĀ

B. VIPASHYANĀ

This has three parts:

1. Looking at the Abiding Nature, the Essence of Mind
2. Cutting through a Basis or Root of Mind
3. Pointing Out the Nature of Mind by Means of Determining Awareness-Emptiness

1. LOOKING AT THE ABIDING NATURE, THE ESSENCE OF MIND

Teaching Session 40 & Meditation Session 33

Do an abbreviated version of the preliminary practices and review the shamatha meditation sessions briefly, just enough so as not to forget them.

To begin with, let your mind totally relax in its own state. The way to place it is as follows: Rest in brilliant (*mdangs*) clarity and lucidity (*gsal dangs*), like the sun free from clouds. Rest, recognizing arising [thoughts] and feelings to be mind, like waves and water. Rest with clarity but without any fixation, like a small child seeing a shrine hall.

Analyze in the following way: What is the essence of that resting mind? What is its color? What kind of form or shape does it 81b have? Is it a thing or a nonthing?† First, where does it come from? Now, where does it abide? In the end, where does it cease? Is it in the body? Does it have names? Is it an internal or external thing? Does it exist in a form that corresponds to any of the beings of the

six classes?

If you find a form, shape, or essence, about which you can say, "It is like this," that is fine. But if you do not find anything, do not be discouraged. Persevere in looking again and again.

[ANALYZING THE RESTING MIND AND THE MOVING MIND]

Teaching Session 41 & Meditation Session 34

[QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED BY THE GURU]

[Analyzing the Resting Mind]

Ask [the students], "What is the essence of the mind like while it is resting?" Some may reply, "Other than simply being at rest, the essence of mind is not something to be known about which I can say, 'It is like this.'" Then you should ask, "Is that mind a neutral mind that is dark, or is it sharp clarity (*gsal hrig ge ba*) that is naked (*rjen ne ba*)?" If the reply is that it is like the latter, they see the essence of mind. If the reply is that it is like the former, they should be instructed [to continue] to train [in the meditation].

Ask them, "Is there any difference between [your mind now] and [your mind] when it was resting before?"[a] The reply may be, "Previously when my mind was at rest, my mind was light and free (*'bol le shig ge*), and appearances seemed to be unclear and hazy. It was relaxed and quite unlike my previous efforts. [However,] since
82a I did not distinguish the details of objects and did not see the essence of awareness, this resting was stagnant. My mind seemed as if it was stuck in a hole or it was a bee caught in sap. I was resting in a state of unclear awareness. Now, my resting mind is vibrant clarity and lucidity (*gsal dangs sing nge ba*), which is not conceptually identified." They see merely a portion of the essence of mind.

Others may say, "There is no difference between [my mind now] and before." Instruct them by saying, "You are simply able to suppress your mental afflictions. However, to achieve awakening, in addition to that, the wisdom of vipashyanā must arise in your mind-stream. You must continue to exert yourself and practice

a. Resting before: This refers to when you were resting in shamatha. You should compare the present mind that is investigating in vipashyanā with the previous state of mind that was simply resting. (KTGR)

until this develops."

[Analyzing the Moving Mind]

If nothing is found through searching [the mind] at rest, [instruct the students] to allow thoughts to manifest in their minds. The variety of rambling thoughts, that which thinks all sorts of things, is called "mind." Ask them, "What is this mind's color? What is its shape? What is the essence of the thinking mind?[213] Is it a form, an object for the eyes? Or is it a sound, smell, taste, or tangible object, an object for any of the other five sense faculties?[†a]

"What is [the mind] like while thinking? Is it [some part of the body] from the head to the soles of the feet: the faculties, the main organs, the limbs, the body [itself], the hair, or the skin? Is it the five external elements,[†] the six classes of beings, or something else?"

Have them examine thoroughly by asking, "Is the essence of 82b
mind existent, nonexistent, both, or neither? What is the essence of mind like while it is thinking and while it is resting?"

2. CUTTING THROUGH A BASIS OR ROOT [OF MIND]

Teaching Session 42 & Meditation Session 35

[QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED BY THE GURU]

[Tell students,] if they did not find [the mind] while searching in these ways, to search again with care and effort for that mind as they did before. If nothing is found through searching like that, then have them investigate by thoroughly examining [with these questions]: "What is the searcher itself like? What difference is there between the previous mind that was relaxed in its own state and the present mind that is analyzing? How does this [analyzing] mind arise, abide, and depart?"

[Tell the students] to allow conceptual movement, and recognize each and every moment [of thought]. Ask them whether the resting mind and the moving mind are the same or not. If someone replies, "The two are the same," give them the pointing-out

a. The questions here concern both the thinking mind (*'phro ba'i sems*) and thoughts (*rnam rtog 'phro ba*). (KTGR)

instructions for sameness.

For example, if a married couple has a child, when [the child] is with the mother, [the child] is not with the father. When the child is with the father, he or she is not with the mother. The child can carry news back and forth [between the parents]. Similarly, when the mind is at rest, it is not moving, and when it is in motion, it is not at rest. The rester and mover are one and the same mind. This points out the sameness of resting (*gnas pa*) and conceptual movement (*'gyu ba*).

[Remarks for Gurus]

Some people see the essence of mind but do not know how to ex-
83f press it because they do not know any dharma terminology. You must examine and question them about the exact level of their experiences. Others may not have given rise [to any experiences] in their mind-stream, but they know how to express themselves flawlessly using dharma terminology. Their use of dharma terms should be scrutinized and checked well. The use of dharma language that is [merely based on] an intellectual understanding will not stand up [to questioning] and should be separated out.

All of these [students] should be evaluated in the light of your own [meditation] experiences and guided well through the use of skillful methods.

[THE ELEVEN APPLICATIONS]

Teaching Session 43 & Meditation Session 36

Further, a basis and root [of mind] must be cut through by means of the eleven applications (*yid la byed pa bcu gcig*). The eleven are the thorough applications of:

1. A complete search (*yongs su 'tshol ba*)
2. An individual examination (*so sor brtag pa*)
3. A detailed analysis (*zhib mor dbyod pa*)
4. Shamatha (*zhi gnas*)
5. Vipashyanā (*lhag mthong*)
6. Unification (*zung 'brel*)

7. Clarity (*gsal ba*)
8. Nonconceptuality (*mi rtog pa*)
9. Equanimity (*btang snyoms*)
10. Continuity (*rgyun mi 'chad pa*)
11. Nondistraction (*yengs pa med pa*)

1. [A COMPLETE SEARCH] Asking, "Does the mind [inherently] exist or not? What is its essence like?" continually search your mind-stream.

2. [AN INDIVIDUAL EXAMINATION] Specifically, cut through [whether the mind has] a color or shape; arises, abides, or departs; has a basis, and so forth.

3. [A DETAILED ANALYSIS] Look for the searcher, that which searches, and so forth, gradually and definitively. 83b

4. [SHAMATHA] By searching, examining, and analyzing like that, first you determine that your mind lacks any inherent nature. In the same way, you determine that all phenomena are merely names. Rest your mind fully in the profound reality (*zab mo'i don*).

5. [VIPASHYANĀ] By searching the essence of that resting [mind] itself in the same way you did before, fully realize its very essence.

6. [UNIFICATION] Those [i.e., shamatha and vipashyanā] are not different; do not separate them.

7. [CLARITY] If dullness or sluggishness occurs, bring to mind whatever stimulates it, and uplift [your mind].

8. [NONCONCEPTUALITY] When scattering or agitation occurs, exert yourself in the methods that pacify these.

9. [EQUANIMITY] When you are free from dullness or agitation, rest in the very essence [of the mind] that was searched for, examined, and analyzed.

10. [CONTINUITY] Never be separated from this kind of yoga.

11. [NONDISTRACTION] Tightening your attention upon this [yoga], do not allow any occasion for distraction [to arise].

Your purpose will not be accomplished by being attached to a mere intellectual understanding or an object generality[†] (*don spyi*). [These eleven applications] must arise properly in your mindstream. During the actual practice and also between sessions, do not stop examining and analyzing your own mind. Face inward and ask, "What is the mind's way of being (*gnas tshul*) like? How does 84f the mind abide and depart?" Tighten [your concentration] without wandering.

3. Pointing Out [the Nature of Mind] by Means of Determining Awareness-Emptiness

Teaching Session 44 & Meditation Session 37

[Experiences and realizations] arise in various ways, depending on the mental capability of the individual. Those belonging to the instantaneous type (*cig car ba*) have devotion to the guru, have [gathered] great accumulations [of merit and wisdom] in previous [lives], and have few obscurations. For such persons simply supplicating the guru, merely hearing the dharma, or [encountering] various symbolic conditions will serve as the circumstances [for the pointing-out instructions]. Through simply receiving meditation instruction, the realization of one of the three higher yogas will arise at once, with the experiences of the lower [yogas] being present within the higher ones.

Those belonging to the bypassing type (*thod rgal*) have trained in previous [lives] and currently [experience] great highs and lows in their minds. The experiences and realizations of vipashyanā may arise, though shamatha [experiences] have not arisen. Sometimes shamatha [experiences] arise. Sometimes neither occur.

Those of the gradual type (*rim gyis pa*) are ones whose training [in previous lives] has been weak and who progress slowly in [the development of] genuine practice. Experiences and realizations emerge gradually for them, beginning with shamatha, then vipashyanā, and then their union. Because the majority are of this type and it is also a stable approach, the pointing-out instructions will be given according to the procedure for this [type].

[THE ACTUAL POINTING-OUT INSTRUCTIONS]

When giving the pointing-out instructions, arrange blessed representations and set out excellent offerings, tormas, and gaṇachakra[†] offerings. Then the master and students should supplicate the 84b gurus and the three jewels. Do not give[214] [these instructions] to those who have broken samaya, who have performed very negative actions, or who are very obscured.

To remove distractions and obstacles, have the students maintain the essential points concerning the body, meditate on the preliminaries, and so forth as explained above. Then instruct them in the following way:

Let the mind relax in its own state. Look nakedly, straight at (*rjen lhang gis*) the essence of the relaxed mind. Maintain continuous mindfulness, simply free from distraction. Whatever thoughts arise, do not do anything contrived, such as deliberately abandoning or adopting them—look at their very essence. The meaning of this is expressed in a quotation from Saraha:[215]

> Rest in reflexive clarity itself, [as illustrated by] water
> and candle flames.
> I do not take up or reject [whatever] may come or go.

In brief, what is called "ordinary mind" or "present mind"—stark naked (*rjen lhang nge ba*) clarity-emptiness, which cannot be conceptually identified—is being pointed out.

To search for something somewhere else and then meditate on it is not [the meditation], nor are you being instructed to meditate on something unknowable. The present moment of awareness should be sustained continually with a mindfulness that is simply undistracted—sometimes tightened, sometimes relaxed. Relax during meditative equipoise and tighten [your concentration] during postmeditation. If you practice not fixating on whatever arises, so that it is self-liberated, the wisdom of vipashyanā will arise. 85f Gyalwa Yang Gönpa said:

> The mind free from conceptual identification is the
> expanse of emptiness.
> The clear, empty mind is free from the intellect.
> Leave [mind] in its own place, looking at itself.[216]
> There will come a time when you will see the very
> face of vipashyanā meditation.

Tell them, "Practice in this way," and have them practice.

[POINTING-OUT INSTRUCTIONS TO BE GIVEN THROUGH AN ACTUAL DETERMINATION OF THE MIND'S NATURE]

Teaching Session 45

[Question students by] asking, "At this point, what is the mind like?" They may present unnecessary talk about emptiness, so question them again to check them. It is possible that what they say will be nonsense and something they consider to be "pleasing." Although experiences may have arisen, they will fixate on them. Therefore, to guide them you should question them carefully.

With others [experiences] have, in fact, arisen but they do not know how to express them, and so they should be taught as well as questioned. In this situation, if [what they are saying] is contrived or an object of intellectual understanding, they will be unable to stick[217] with their position; it will keep changing. If it is an actual [experience], whatever it is—an assertion or a denial—they will be able to say, "It happened like this."

By thoroughly questioning them, gradually determine what has arisen and then give the pointing-out instructions. But other than that, if you give the entire pointing-out instructions when you are not certain whether [experiences] will arise, it will [only] pro-
85b duce a jaded person knowledgeable in the dharma. This will hinder them later, including when they receive meditation [instructions] from others.

Tell them, "This is the vital point (*mtshang*) concerning the abiding nature. Clarify awareness and bring back your experiences," and send them off [to practice].

[POINTING-OUT INSTRUCTIONS TO BE GIVEN ACCORDING TO THE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES]

Teaching Session 46

❋ Some may say, "When I look at nonconceptuality, other than resting there, there is nothing at all." Since vipashyanā has not developed, they should continue to look for a few more days.

❋ If someone says, "There is a nothingness, an emptiness that cannot be identified as anything," they see only one portion; they do not see the entirety. They still need to develop a decisive understanding by being undistracted. They should examine whether it is a mere emptiness (*stong rkyang*) and how it is empty.

Some may say, "Mind, which is not conceptually identified, is sharply clear (*gsal hrig ge ba*) and naked (*rjen ne ba*). It is something to be seen that is not seen, [and yet] it is not something that can be thought of as being 'like this.' Although I do not know how to say, 'this is it,' there is something definite."

Or someone may say, "Although the mind rests within emptiness, the resting mind is a vibrant brilliance (*gsal le sing nge ba*) that cannot be identified. This is something I experience but I cannot put into words."

Question them, checking them closely, because if this is an object of intellectual understanding they will not have any confidence in it. If this is an experience (*myong ba*), it will be
unchanging and decisive. This is the development of vipashyanā in 86f
relation to resting.

❋ When someone who has been told to investigate by identifying where the mind arises and ceases gives an answer that is unrelated, it is a sign of a lack of understanding.

❋ If some people say, "There is nothing that arises and nothing that ceases," ask them whether they have that thought at the time [of that experience]. If they say there is [such a thought], have them look at that thought itself.

If others say, "There is nothing to think about as being such-and-such a way, yet there is something to be known that has no arising or cessation," that is the development of vipashyanā in relation to nonconceptuality. They should be given the pointing-out instructions of the union of awareness and emptiness (*rig stong zung 'jug*) as the dharmakāya.

❋ If someone uses flowery phrases, saying, "When I looked at a thought, it had no arising or cessation, it is emptiness," they are lying. Those who say, "By looking at a thought, it disappears without a trace," have developed some slight [experience].

❋ If some say, "All thoughts manifest without identification," ask them whether there is the thought, "There is no identification," at that time or not. If they say there is [such a thought], it is an object of intellectual understanding.

Someone else might say, "There is no such thought and [even that] has no significance. There is no identification of being without fixation. Arising and liberation are simultaneous." This is the development of vipashyanā in relation to thoughts. They should be given the pointing-out instructions of the union of clarity and
86b emptiness (*gsal stong zung 'jug*) as the dharmakāya.

❋ When some have been instructed to look at the objects of the five senses, such as forms, they may say, "That object is vividly (*lam mer*) there." Ask them whether there is some "thing" that can be thought of as being vividly there or not. If they say there is, have them look at that thought.

Others may say, "There is no such thought, and yet that object is unceasing and transparent (*thal le ba*). The mind that looks at it is free (*shig ge ba*), without fixation or particular significance. These two do not seem to be separate, but there is no thought of that." This is the development of vipashyanā in relation to appearances. They should be given the pointing-out instructions of the union of appearance and emptiness (*snang stong zung 'jug*) as the dharmakāya.

❋ These are the methods for discovering the wisdom of vipashyanā right within shamatha. They are called "looking at the essence of meditation." What is known as "reflexive awareness" is seeing the essence of mind by looking. This reflexive awareness is reflexively aware wisdom, great bliss—it is mahāmudrā. If the essence of meditation is not looked at, the essence of mind is not seen. If that is not seen, reflexively aware wisdom will not be recognized. If that is not recognized, there can be no realization of great bliss, the wisdom of vipashyanā. Therefore, it is important to look at the mind.

87f ❋ [Students] should be told that regardless of how they see [the nature of mind], they should be sure to return with something that has arisen in their experience—it should not be simply an object of intellectual understanding. Then have them meditate.

❋ Upon questioning, some may say, "The mind is vividly blissful (*bde gsal le ba*), vividly lucid (*dangs gsal le ba*), and radiant (*wal le ba*). It is something I have a deep conviction about but I do not know how to express it. It cannot be identified through looking." They have recognized (*ngo 'phrod pa*) [the nature of mind].

If they say, "That [experience] does not arise one-pointedly," they should be told that that is an object of intellectual understanding. They must recognize an experience that is not an object of intellectual understanding right within their mind-stream. Therefore, they should not engage in a lot of analysis, but should meditate just as they are instructed. Have them meditate until the experiences and realizations described above develop. When these have developed, give them the [appropriate] pointing-out instructions.

It is not definite that all of these pointing-out instructions, which are [set off by] ornamental marks, should be taught. The essence [of the student's mind] should be pointed out in relationship to the way [experiences] develop and in accordance with the points presented above, which [describe] the signs of recognition.

The pointing-out instructions can also be given in the following two ways:

a) Pointing Out [the Nature of Mind] on the Basis of Conceptual Movement

b) Pointing Out [the Nature of Mind] on the Basis of Appearances

a) POINTING OUT [THE NATURE OF MIND] ON THE BASIS OF CONCEPTUAL MOVEMENT

Teaching Session 47 & Meditation Session 38

Review the preliminaries, the essential points concerning the body, 87b
and the previous shamatha and vipashyanā meditation sessions briefly, just enough so as not to forget them. It is also fine to meditate upon them for a short while.

First, let the mind relax in its own state. Within that state, look directly at its very essence. Then cause conceptual movement: meditate on an image, such as the Jowo [statue] in Lhasa or the Great Buddha [statue] in Tsurphu,[a] until it appears vividly. Then look to see what the difference is between the moving mind

a. The Jowo statue in Lhasa or the Great Buddha statue in

and the resting mind. Look to see what the difference is between the moving mind and the mind that looks at it. By looking in this way, conceptual movement is self-liberated.

Look to see whether the Great Buddha statue appearing as a mental object and the mind in which it appears are the same. If they are the same, examine this: did the mind become the Great Buddha or did the Great Buddha become the mind? If they are not the same, examine this: is that which is seen as the Great Buddha the actual Great Buddha, or is it some other thing that is seen as the Great Buddha?

Look as described above: are all the forms seen by the eyes and the eye consciousness that sees the same or not? Similarly, look analytically at sounds [apprehended] by the ear, smells by the nose, tastes by the tongue, tangible objects and feelings by the body, as you did before.

88f By looking in this way, freedom from all elaborations, such as those of sameness or of difference, is realized, and everything is recognized as the magical display of mind. When conceptual movement has been self-liberated, you have recognized [the pointing out of the nature of mind]. Rest evenly in that state.

[POINTING OUT THAT RESTING AND MOVEMENT ARE THE PLAY OF MIND]

Teaching Session 48 & Meditation Session 40

Bring something desirable clearly to mind. Dwell upon it until passion arises. Then bring something undesirable clearly [to mind] and think about it until hatred arises in your mind. What is the difference in their natures? Look to see what the difference is between the passionate mind, the aggressive mind, and the previous resting mind.

Trying to generate as many thoughts as you can, try to scatter them in the four cardinal and eight intermediate directions all at once. Look to see what the difference is between doing that and

a. (continued from previous page) Tsurphu are two famous statues of the Buddha in central Tibet that are well-known to Tibetans. The point is to meditate on (or visualize) a familiar image until it appears clearly in your mind.

the previous resting mind.

As is said, "Two thoughts cannot occur simultaneously." You cannot generate many [thoughts] at the same moment. By looking in that way, everything is realized to be the play[†] of [either] the resting or movement of a single mind-itself. The many [thoughts]—which are self-clarified, self-recognized conceptual movement—are realized to be one taste, like water poured into water. 88b

[POINTING-OUT INSTRUCTIONS FOR BRINGING THE FIVE POISONS ONTO THE PATH]

Teaching Session 49 & Meditation Session 40

Look directly at the essence of whatever thought arises. When that very thought appears as clarity-emptiness without being identified, there is no need to discard a negative thought nor to seek a remedy for it somewhere else. It is said:

> Liberation occurs through recognizing
> Just that by which you are bound.
> When this special path is realized,
> Buddhahood is arrived at in this lifetime.

Think about an attractive object that you desire, and let this [develop to the point where] your mind almost loses control. Then give rise to aversion for something unpleasant and look at that [mind].[a] When you are sleepy, look at the essence of the drowsy mind. Likewise, look at the essence of pride, jealousy, or miserliness. Examine these one at a time with undistracted mindfulness.

Do not perpetuate previous thoughts and do not be interrupted by other thoughts. Since recognition [of the pointing-out instructions] will not occur if you look for just a short time, look with intensified awareness, dividing [your time] into about ten sessions [a day].

In particular, no matter which mental affliction arises (such as desire), do not follow it, but look directly at its essence. By resting 89f

a. Although the text does not specify that you should examine your mind having given rise to passion, it is understood that you should examine that also. (DPR)

undistracted within them, the five poisons will arise without a basis† and free from a root.† When this occurs, desire and the other [mental afflictions] are purified without being abandoned, and are thus called "self-liberated." This is exactly what is referred to as the five wisdoms† (such as discriminating wisdom) and the five victorious ones (Amitābha and the others).

Likewise, by looking directly at whatever thought arises and resting within that, [that thought] will be self-liberated as it lacks any inherent nature. This is known as "the key instructions for taking the five poisons as the path," and accords with the statement:

> Just as poisons are transformed by mantras,
> There is the instruction for taking the five poisons as the path.

[QUOTATIONS: THE NATURE OF THOUGHTS]

Teaching Session 50

In brief, myriad virtuous, nonvirtuous, and neutral [appearances and thoughts] arise from the expressive power† (*rtsal snang*) of the intrinsic state, mind-itself, and yet they are of equal taste, with nothing [about them that needs to be] stopped or produced. Rather than seeking some remedy for them elsewhere, look directly at the essence of whatever arises. By sustaining this without distraction during the four daily activities, [appearances and thoughts] will manifest nakedly, without a basis and free from a root, because they cannot be conceptually identified and they have no inherent nature. By manifesting reflexively aware wisdom,† the delusion of
89b dualistic perception is self-liberated. Avalokiteshvara expressed this by saying:

> Since whatever arises is the intrinsic state,
> If you leave it as it is, just being mindful of whatever arises,
> You are, undoubtedly, a regal yogin or yoginī
> [Resting] in emptiness.

The Wisdom Ḍākinī stated:

> By discovering this reflexively aware wisdom,

> A lamp illuminates aeons of darkness,
> And karmic delusion are utterly destroyed,
> Like a person waking up from sleep.

The unequaled Dakpo Rinpoche taught:

> Thoughts are the dharmakāya.
> This is not contrived through remedies;
> It is the state of luminous awareness.

The exalted Maitreya[218] declared:

> From this there is nothing to be removed;
> To this there is nothing to be added.
> Look correctly at what is real;
> When reality is seen, there is liberation.

Gyalwa Götsangpa[219] instructs:

> When thoughts arise,
> Instead of regarding them as faults,
> Recognize them to be empty and leave them just as they are.
> Thoughts will arise as the dharmakāya.

There is an infinite number of such sayings. By developing and maintaining this kind of understanding and receiving the pointing-out instructions, such practice will develop easily.

Previously, you did not know how to meditate on thoughts.[220] 90f
Now, you do know how to meditate on them. Until now, like the way your eyes cannot see themselves, thoughts obscured themselves, so the radiance (*gdangs ma*) of such manifestations was not seen. Now, since thoughts are transparent (*dangs ba*), their essence is seen. The real meditation is [realized] through thoughts. Whatever thoughts arise, recognize them and rest in their very essence: naked clarity-emptiness. Leave them right within that state without contrivance, without hope or fear, and thoughts will be liberated in their own place. The essence of thoughts will be realized to be clarity-emptiness, free from elaborations. From the oral teachings of Gampopa:

> Regard thoughts as necessary. Regard them as a great

kindness. Regard them as very dear to your heart. Regard[221] them as indispensable.

When [thoughts] appear in these ways, they are seen to be meaningful—this is their basic abiding nature (*gshis gyi gnas lugs*). If there are no thoughts, there is no dharmatā. Therefore, regard thoughts as necessary. Since previously you did not know the nature of thoughts, you wandered in saṃsāra. Since now thoughts reveal the dharmakāya, regard them as a great kindness.

Now, even though thoughts arise, if you know how to rest within them without any effort, they are the dharmakāya. Therefore, regard them as dear to
90b your heart. When the experience of thoughts as being dear to you develops, there is no reason for the "gathering of the dhātu" to occur. It is said that the "gathering of the dhātu" happens because thoughts are seen as faults.

When [Gampopa] went to upper Dakpo from Gampo, he gave this teaching to the assembly of monks:

> Great meditators may wish for the absence of thoughts, but they will be unable to stop thoughts. These great meditators will just exhaust themselves. However, just as the more wood there is, the greater the fire, the more thoughts there are, the more nondual wisdom increases. Thus it is fine to let the five poisons and thoughts arise just as they are.
>
> This uncontrived [state], with nothing to be stopped or produced, is itself the wisdom mind of the buddhas of the three times. This alone is the buddha we do not realize. There is no other buddha.

Pakmo Drupa explained:

> Thoughts are awareness.
> Superior beings should know that
> Awareness is the three doors of liberation.[†]
> With a very joyful attitude,
> Regard [thoughts] as an especially great kindness.

> Thoughts are mind-itself.
> If you wish to abandon them, they will increase. 91a
> Since they are unborn, they should not be rejected.

He continued:

> When thoughts arise,
> Recognize them clearly as your guru.
> Understand that thoughts are a great kindness.
> Give rise to the stable certainty
> That the dharmakāya and thoughts
> Do not differ in the slightest way.
> This is your unmistaken guru.
>
> Having recognized thoughts to be mind,
> Mind-itself is recognized to be unborn.
> Thoughts are not to be abandoned.
> Nonconceptual wisdom is not to be produced.
>
> These appearances of diverse thoughts,
> Like salt poured into water,
> Are the nonduality of thought and emptiness.
> The guru who shows this
> Is the guru who opens the door to knowledge.

There are infinite such teachings.

The siddha Orgyenpa advised:

> It is not necessary to seek nonconceptuality intentionally. It is not necessary to regard thoughts as faults. There will not be a famine of practice: this will be the beginning of a great harvest. Do not seek a quietly resting, vividly clear, and delightfully blissful mind; practice with whatever arises without accepting or rejecting anything.

It is important that, no matter what thought arises, you do not try to stop or produce [anything]. In a state of undistracted mindful-
ness, do not fabricate—[simply] look at its essence. Rest naturally 91b
settled within a gap, an opening (*had de phyad de*), relaxed (*lhug pa*) and free from conceptual fixation.

Just as the moon reflected in water is not beyond being water itself, all memories and thoughts are only mind. Mind is clarity-emptiness like a reflected image. Looking directly at that, thoughts arise nakedly (*lhang nge*) and unceasingly, without a basis and free from a root. This points out the dharmakāya. Just as waves are nothing other than water, various thoughts arise within the intrinsic state of clarity-emptiness; nevertheless, these are not separate entities. The *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra]*[222] states:

> This is called "saṃsāra."
> This is called "nirvāṇa."
> Nirvāṇa will not be realized somewhere else
> By abandoning saṃsāra.

As it is taught, recognize memories and thoughts to be mind, and exert yourself until you [know] that they are without basis and free from any root.

[POINTING-OUT INSTRUCTIONS TO BE GIVEN ON THE BASIS OF ERADICATING HIDDEN FLAWS]

Teaching Session 51

❁ Tell [students], "Look at your mind to see what it is like. Does it depart, remain, or perform an activity? Come back with [your answers about] the way it is." Let them investigate for a few days.

Upon being questioned, if someone says, "My mind does not
92f do anything; it just remains there," ask them, "From the time you left the other day until now you did not have any thoughts about eating, getting dressed, going to sleep, and so forth? You did not have thoughts about wanting to come here now or that I am your guru? You were [only] resting?" If they reply that they [were not] without such [thoughts], tell them, "What you said about [your mind] just remaining there contradicts your last [statement]. Go off and keep looking with close attention."

❁ Others, like old great meditators, may say, "My mind remains in the uncontrived intrinsic state," or they may talk about emptiness saying, "It is free from conceptual elaborations." Tell them, "I told you the other day to bring [your experiences of] the ordinary mind, unfabricated by remedies and not affected by philosophical tenets. I did not ask for your meditation jargon. Go continue your investigation."

❁ Some, like geshes, may not have had [an experience of] the nature arise in their mind-stream, and may answer by using many quotations from the sūtras, tantras, and so forth. Tell them, "I said the other day that it is not necessary to bring the words of dry texts, but to look at your mind unaltered by philosophical tenets. Quotations are of no benefit. Continue your investigation."

❁ Through repeated questioning, some people may say, "The ordi- 92b
nary mind just as it is, not fabricated by remedies or altered by tenets, does not remain still for even an instant. It produces all kinds of thoughts and does all sorts of things." Tell them, "You have done some observation and now [see] that the mind does not stay still. That is it."

❁ Tell them, "You should continue to look carefully to see if all the numerous appearances that occur—such as desire and aggression, happiness and suffering, your various enemies and relatives, and the environment and its inhabitants—have some creator other [than mind], are created by the mind, or are the mind itself." Let them investigate this.

Question them again. Someone may say, "The environment and its inhabitants are created by Cha† (*Chwa*), Īshvara,† or the World's Forefather."† Ask them, "Where do Cha and the others live? When did they make [the world]? Where did they find the materials? How did they make it?" If they say that they do not know such things, tell them, "Then why did you say that [the world] was made by Cha and the others? You should not lie in the context of dharma. You must be certain before you answer. You have heard these false myths of the tīrthikas and the world; they are uncertain." Send them off to continue their investigation.

❁ Upon further questioning, some may say, "The creator of every- 93f
thing is the mind. When the mind is still, there is nothing. When the mind is active, everything is created." Ask them, "Are the mind that is the creator and what it creates the same or are they different?" If someone says they are different, ask them, "When you think of a pillar, the thought of the pillar is mind, but at the

same time, is there any pillar apart from the mind?" If they say that there is no such duality, they have recognized [the nature of mind]. It is through [both the guru's and the students'] skill in these methods that [students] will recognize the essence of the deluded mind.

❀ In the context of all of the [above] pointing-out instructions, [you should tell the students], "When you say that you [see] that the mind does all sorts of things, at that point you have recognized thoughts."

❀ The deluded mind arises and ceases instantly. Through the force of its habitual tendencies, the deluded mind manifests as the delusive appearances of the six classes of beings: a variety of colors, shapes, forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects, and phenomena. These arise and cease.

[Tell students,] "This is what you are to comprehend and recognize. When it is said, 'All phenomena arise and cease instantly,' it means there are no phenomena that are not mind.[223] If the deluded mind is impermanent, then delusive appearances cannot be
93b anything other than impermanent. Understand this."

❀ [You should also tell students,] "You said, 'The creator of everything is mind; there is no other [creator]. When the mind is still, there is nothing. When the mind is active, everything is created.' That is it. Moreover, the mind, which is the creator, and its creation do not exist as a duality. As you said, 'The thought of a pillar is mind; there is no pillar other than that.' Likewise, whatever appears is mind. This is expressed in the *Vajra Tent*:[224]

> "Outside of the precious mind
> There are no buddhas or sentient beings.
> Places and objects [perceived by] the consciousnesses
> Have no external existence at all.

"The great Brahman Saraha[225] proclaimed:

> "Mind-itself alone is the seed of everything.
> Saṃsāra and nirvāṇa manifest to it.
> Homage to the mind, which is like a wish-fulfilling jewel,
> Bestowing all desired results.

"You should ascertain that no matter what appearances manifest (impure or pure), they are only your own mind; there is not even the slightest thing that exists outside of that."

b) POINTING OUT [THE NATURE OF MIND] ON THE BASIS OF APPEARANCES

This has four parts:

i) Pointing Out Appearances to Be Mind

ii) Pointing Out Mind to Be Empty

iii) Pointing Out Emptiness to Be Spontaneously Present

iv) Pointing Out Spontaneous Presence to Be Self-Liberated

i) POINTING OUT APPEARANCES TO BE MIND

Teaching Session 52 & Meditation Session 41

[QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED BY THE GURU]

The preliminaries and so forth should be briefly reviewed as before, 94f
just enough so that they are not forgotten.

[Tell students] to direct their eyes and attention towards whatever form appears clearly in front of them, and to look at that without distraction. At first an image of that form will arise. Then they may want to stop looking. Next their vision may become "numb." At this point they should look to see if the form that appears to their eyes is something apart from their mind.

Someone may say, "When I looked, the support for the eyes was indeed the viewed object, but the looking mind was inside—it is here." Instruct them [by asking,] "Where is that mind? Is it outside, inside, or in-between? Where does the form stop and the mind begin?" Since their mind is still not resting on the focal support, they should look to see how that form appears to the mind: what kind of color and shape does [the mind] have?

If someone says, "Appearances are mind," question them to determine whether they are definite about this or not. Instruct them to examine whether the form has become mind or mind has become the form.

Alternatively, tell them to consider the four elements. They should examine whether the four elements, for their part, think or
94b say, "We are the four elements," or whether it is the mind that labels them "the four elements" and thinks, "These are the four elements."

In the same way, they should direct their attention successively to sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects. Instruct them to examine these closely as they did before, and then question them.

Someone may say, "When I look, there is simply the focal support. Other than that, the looking mind isn't anything—it has no color or shape." They are certain about the nonduality of appearances and mind and have established this experience on the basis of one-pointed observation. Since this is realized through the key instructions and blessings of genuine gurus, they should recognize their great fortune. It is the mind itself that manifests as delusive appearances, such as focal supports; there is nothing that is truly existent. It is said in the *Descent into Laṅkā Sūtra*:[226]

> The mind stirred by habitual tendencies
> Arises as outer appearances.
> They are not existent objects [but] mind itself.
> To see external objects is mistaken.

The *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra* states:

> O sons and daughters of the victorious ones, these three realms are only mind.

Virūpa commented:

> All phenomena are the reflected appearances of
> 95f mind-itself.

Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva[227] says:

> Who made the burning-iron ground?[a]
> From where do those flames arise?
> All these things
> Were taught by the Buddha to be the evil mind.

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a. This refers to the experience in the hot hells, where the ground is burning iron.

Tell them to practice in accordance with these statements that are extracted from the infinite authentic scriptures.

[EXAMINING THE BODY-MIND RELATIONSHIP]

Teaching Session 53 & Meditation Session 42

[QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED BY THE GURU]

Question [students by saying], "Draw your attention within. Are mind and body the same or different?"

Someone may say they are different. Ask them, "Are body and mind like a house and a person, or are they like a body and clothing?" No matter which of those two they may answer, [question them again,] saying, "If a thorn is stuck somewhere in your body—anywhere from your head to the soles of your feet—who feels this painful sensation, the body or mind? If it is [only] the body that feels it, then it would be possible for a corpse to feel [sensations] but, [of course, a corpse] does not feel [sensations]. If it is the mind that feels [the pain from a thorn]—and body and mind are separate—then the mind would be feeling pain that is occurring in a [separate] body. Consequently, it would be possible for the mind to become sick when a tree is cut down or the earth is dug up.

"Not only that, when we say that appearances are mind, [it implies that] all distant appearances are mind. So how is it possible that the nearby body is not mind? If both appearances and the
body are mind, they are equal in being that [i.e., mind]. If they are 95b
not [mind], they are equal in that regard. Because there are no other possibilities, continue to examine thoroughly."

Instruct them [further] by saying, "If body and mind are the same, when the body is born and dies, the mind would also be born and die. When the body changes, the mind would also change. When the mind changes, the body would also change. When the body is burned by fire, the mind would also be burned. Would there not be this kind of fallacy? Therefore, you should generate diligence and meditate. Having analyzed well, have certainty in your mind about [your meditative] experiences that are not merely intellectual objects, and cut through your doubts. Then return with your answers."

On being questioned again, some may say, "It does seem that such things as the appearance of the pain of being pierced with a

thorn or the appearance of physical birth and death manifests as such due to not realizing that appearances are the inseparability of appearance and mind, and due to not having untied the knots of the apprehended and apprehender (*gzung 'dzin*). But, in truth, these are [only] the appearances of my own mind; there is nothing that has any true existence. Even a corpse at death is a mental appearance of the individual who sees it; it does not exist apart from that." Now there is recognition. Tell them to determine that apprehended objects and the apprehending subject are their own
96f mind and recognize this about all delusive concepts—virtuous, nonvirtuous, or neutral. They should rest without a basis and free from any root.

[QUOTATIONS: POINTING OUT APPEARANCES TO BE MIND]

Teaching Session 54

By meditating like that, everything—objects, the body, and mind—is directly realized to be the reflexive appearances of the mind alone. They are directly realized to be beyond the scope of the conceptual mind, such as being the same or different [things]; to be inexpressible through thought or speech; and to be free from the extremes of conceptual elaborations and intellectual constructs. When the characteristics of an object of meditation and a meditator are liberated in their own place, this is called directly seeing the very face of connate mind-itself, the dharmakāya, or it is called "the actual buddha."

No matter what statement is made—concerning sameness or difference, existence or nonexistence, things or nonthings, matter or consciousness,[228] being something or not being something, emptiness or not empty, object aspects or subject aspects, permanence or impermanence, apprehended and apprehender, arising or ceasing, coming or going, and so forth—all of these [conventional terms] are, in fact, the reflexive appearances of mind-itself. To take what is not existent to be existent is to be mistaken about the abiding nature.

Since [the concepts of] "sameness" (*gcig*) and "difference" (*tha dad*) exist only in relation to each other, and since [appearances
96b and mind] are not different [for the reasons given above], it is not logical to apply [the concept of] sameness either. Nevertheless,

there is no paradox in saying they are the same when considering appearances, awareness, and emptiness to be simply inseparable and of one taste. Take for example how fire and its heat, or a moon's reflection in water and that water, cannot be separated.

When you are guiding beginners or logicians, question them, using the analysis of one or many and so forth, to determine whether they are certain that appearances are mind or not. However, when you are sustaining your own practice, do not do any investigation using the numerous elaborations such as those [just mentioned]. Rest loosely, without any fabrication or contrivance, right within whatever appearance occurs. Through this, appearances will be realized to be mind and special experiences and realizations will develop. However, other than just this, a conceptually created meditation on emptiness—determined by means of the reasoning establishing the lack of being one or many—is not suitable now. This would involve the fault of deviating from emptiness as the basic nature of objects of knowledge.[a] At this point do not engage in any kind of conceptually created meditation. Be relaxed and loose within a state entirely free from striving, hope or fear. Sustain an uncontrived state, without fixating on what arises. This is very important. It was said by the siddha Orgyenpa:

> Appearances and mind exist like fire and its heat. 97f

He also stated:

> All appearances are the self-radiance (*rang mdangs*) of mind or the luminosity (*'od*) of mind.

Dakpo Rinpoche explained this:

> Appearances and mind are the same. There are no appearances somewhere that are not included within mind. Since all these appearances are the luminosity of mind or the dharmatā of mind, when mind is realized, what binds appearances[b] is undone by itself.

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a. This is one of the four deviations from emptiness. See page 195 in the Concluding Topics for a detailed discussion.
b. What binds appearances (*snang ba sgrog*) is the apprehension of them as real (*bden 'dzin*). (KTGR)

Mind-itself and dharmatā are the same. The luminosity of mind-itself is dharmatā. By realizing mind-itself, what binds dharmatā is undone by itself. For example, once the sun has gone, it is not possible for its light to continue; the light goes with the sun. This process is definite. In the same way, through just realizing mind-itself, dharmatā will be automatically realized.

When the mind is purified, appearances will naturally be purified. It is sufficient to leave appearances, mind-itself, and so forth in their own place and meditate on the essence of mind. When meditating, leave alone phenomena and dharmatā: meditate directly on the essence of mind [in accord with] "the pointing-out instructions for old women."

Alternatively, having determined clearly that everything external and internal, the environment and
97b its inhabitants, are mind-itself, meditate on the essence [of mind]. These two [approaches] are similar.

Through meditating within the ground, dharmatā, you may meditate upon not finding any essence, but you will not become awakened.[a]

Prāṇa and mind are the same. The movement of prāṇa causes diverse thoughts to arise in the mind. They cannot be said to be identical or different.[229] When mind is realized, these are purified in their own place.[b] This is [an explanation of] nondual, connate awareness-emptiness.

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a. Meditating within the ground, dharmatā (*chos nyid gzhi'i thog tu bsgom*): This refers to shamatha meditation. The essence of the resting mind is not discovered through shamatha and, therefore, awakening does not occur, because in shamatha you simply meditate on a mere emptiness (*stong rkyang*) without the aspect of clarity (*gsal cha*). (DPR)

b. "When mind is realized" means when the abiding nature of mind is realized "these are purified in their own place." "These" refers to the impure mind (or thoughts) and impure prāṇa. (KTGR)

He concluded:

> Connate mind, the dharmakāya, and connate appearances, the luminosity of the dharmakāya, are inseparable, like sandalwood and its scent.

According to the explanations of the protector of beings, Shang:

> To say, "These appearances do not exist apart from mind," is simply a conventional expression showing that appearances are mind. Due to the force of conditions, mind-itself arises and appears as various [things] that are red, white, and so forth, like the way bubbles emerge in water. Appearances arise [from] conditions.
>
> All your infinite memories and thoughts are like clouds in the sky. Since they do not have any place from which they arise, anywhere that they dwell, or somewhere that they dissolve into, they are free from a root. All your experiences of happiness, suffering, or indifference are like the experiences of happiness and
> suffering in a dream; they are without an existent ba- 98a
> sis. All the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are like rivers (such as the Ganges and the Oxus), which become of one taste in the great ocean; because they are not separate entities, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are of one taste.

He continued:

> Since thoughts do not have a color or shape, they are spontaneously present as the dharmatā. Since all appearances are, from the beginning, truly free from being either one or many, they are spontaneously present as the dharmakāya. Therefore, do not hope for any result.

The exalted Götsangpa taught:

> All these appearances are your own mind. Although they appear, they lack any inherent nature, like reflections in a mirror or the moon [reflected] in

> water. Rest in openness (*phyad de*) without fixation. Appearances do not need to be blocked. If you rest without fixation, that is mahāmudrā. Sustain this without distraction. That is sufficient.

He explained further:

> In general, the various appearances that manifest are your own mind. Since appearances and emptiness have existed without duality from the beginning, it is
> 98b not necessary to hold your mind inside. When a form appears as an object for your eyes, that very appearance of a form is your own mind. Forms are the nonduality of appearance and emptiness. By simply resting, without any fixation, directly on a form, the apprehended object and apprehending subject will be liberated in their own place. In the same way, by resting directly on a sound, smell, taste, tangible object, or phenomenon occurring in your mind, it will be self-liberated. Therefore, do not meditate on the mind, instead meditate, without fixation, directly on the six external sense objects. The six consciousnesses will arise as meditation, thereby enhancing [your practice].
>
> There is no need to bind yourself with thoughts such as, "I am staying in retreat." It is also fine not to be caught up in the concern that you should not look out [from your retreat place or] be seen by others.[a]
>
> Generally, you should meditate upon whatever it is that disturbs your mind. If you are sick, meditate upon that. If you are hungry, meditate upon that. If you are cold, meditate upon feeling cold. If you are unhappy, meditate upon your unhappiness. By doing this, all situations will arise as meditation. Why is this? It is because the appearances of those situations are your own mind, and because the dharmakāya is

a. Generally, when in retreat you should not see others or allow others to see you; however, at this point you do not need to be limited by such concerns. (DPR)

> not apart from the mind. 99f
>
> By meditating like that, there is no way that [your meditation] will not be enhanced. Nevertheless, [since] mind-itself is empty of a [truly existent] essence, there is no object of meditation to be intentionally [created]. Be undistracted within a state of nonmeditation. There is no other method.

The siddha Orgyenpa taught:

> From among appearances and awareness, what are called "appearances" are what arise to the five senses from the all-basis (which is beyond being an object that can be known or expressed through speech or thought). Furthermore, forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects—the objects for the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body, [respectively]—are nonconceptual and neutral. These are influenced by the mind, which follows the five senses. These myriad and infinite appearances are what are referred to as "appearances." By fixating on them, we wander in saṃsāra. The cause of this fixation is the full-blown habitual tendencies of the deluded mind to which we have become inured throughout beginningless time.
>
> In this way, there are various appearances and yet things do not have even a sesame seed's worth of true existence. For example, in a dream, the appearances of habitual tendencies manifest as a variety of feelings
> of happiness and suffering, yet [those appearances] 99b
> are not truly existent things. When we awaken from sleep, we realize them to be unreal. Another [illustration] is that innumerable illusory horses, elephants, and so forth can appear, yet they do not do so because they are real. They are false appearances produced through the power of magical substances and mantras. Likewise, the appearances of the habitual tendencies of the deluded mind seem to be real or permanent; however, the perceiving subject of the appearances is nothing other than our own minds.
>
> What is referred to as "awareness" is that which perceives as the subject aspect through the five[230]

sense consciousnesses. An "awareness that is separate from appearances" does not exist even for an instant. Appearances are awareness, and awareness is appearances. As it is said in the sūtras:[231]

> Form is empty; emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form; form is not other than emptiness.

And further:

> Do not meditate in any way with appearances, no matter how they manifest. Without fabricating, rest relaxed, simply without distraction. Through this, an understanding and realization of the union [of appearances and emptiness] will arise while there are appearances; there will be [a sense of] pervading bliss.
>
> Appearances do not need to be blocked. Empti-
> 100f ness does not need to be produced. Although many appearances arise, they are one taste within the essence of the one mind; therefore, the many are of one taste. Appearances are not to be set apart as something [only] external, and awareness is not to be set apart as something [only] internal—they are realized to be unified. By sustaining this, it is as is said, "one taste arises as many." Dependent-arisings[†] appear like brocade silk glistening in the noonday sun.

The exalted Mikyö Dorje's *Hundred Thousand Styles [of Explaining] Mahāmudrā*[232] states:

> The teachings that "thoughts are the dharmakāya" and "appearances are your own mind" are regarded as paramount in the Kagyü lineage. Since these are the unsurpassable, genuine dharma, fortunate beings should exert themselves in practicing this teaching as much as they can: those of highest [capabilities] by realizing it; those of intermediate by experiencing it; and those of the lowest by [developing] the knowledge that is an intellectual understanding.

Kyobpa Drikungpa taught:

> All phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are your own mind. Since mind is primordially unborn, it is like the center of space.

Pakmo Drupa said:

> It is said, "There is nothing to be stopped or produced in relationship to either the body or the mind." This means that the perfection [of the realization] that externally apprehended objects and the internally apprehending mind are inseparable will eventually develop.
>
> It is said, "Appearances arise as your own na-
> ture." This means that all phenomena—appearances 100b
> and sounds—arise as the nature of your own mind. This is referred to as "[nothing] passes beyond that state."

In the *Summary of the View*[233] it says:

> Reflexive awareness, free from elaborations,
> Appears yet is empty; it is empty yet it appears.
> The inseparability of appearances and emptiness
> Is like the moon [reflected] in water.
> In this way, nonduality will be determined.

The *Ocean of Wisdom Tantra*[234] explains:

> Body and mind are inseparable.
> Support and supported arise and cease [together].

This should be known as the essential point of everything. All dependent phenomena (such as what exists or what does not exist) should be understood in this way.

ii) POINTING OUT MIND TO BE EMPTY

Teaching Session 55 & Meditation Session 43

No matter what conventional term is used for mind-itself, such as "naturally luminous," it is beyond being an object for speech or thought, such as being something with form, color, or shape, being

something inside or outside the body, or having some aspects, so that it could be said, "It exists like this." [In this way,] it resembles space.

Earlier, during the sections containing the key instructions for investigating the mind, you were engaged in searching. You were asked how you saw the mind: whether it is external, internal, or in-between; what its color and shape are like; what the arising, ceas-
101f ing, and abiding of its nature are like; and so forth. As you said that it is something to be seen that is not seen as anything, [the mind] cannot be shown at all; it does not truly exist. Even though you have searched externally, internally, and in the ten directions, it cannot be found. This is because, from the point of view of emptiness, the nature of mind does not truly exist. It is not that its nature exists but that you [simply] cannot find it. To see that the essence of mind does not exist as anything is the supreme seeing.

However, someone may wonder, "Since it is possible to demonstrate from the very beginning that mind can neither be viewed nor seen, what point is there in investigating whether it has a color and so forth?" The reason such [investigation is necessary] is that sentient beings have not realized that mind—which lacks an inherent nature—is just that: nonexistent. Throughout beginningless time they have taken what they call "me" and "I" to be real. Based on that, desire, aggression, and delusion arise, and they wander in saṃsāra, the ocean of suffering.

In order to reverse that, you must cut through the root of your own mind, the main root of saṃsāra, by searching, examining, and analyzing. Thereby you determine that [mind] is empty and lacks a self-entity (*bdag med*), and you definitely see the unmistaken abiding nature. Being certain that the mind lacks an inherent nature, you confirm that the delusion of apprehending a self-entity of saṃ-
101b sāra [indeed] has no reality (*bden med*). By the force of that, you are certain that all phenomena are empty. On this basis you reverse your attachment to worldly activities, and cut through the root of reification (*dngos 'dzin*), the cause of saṃsāra. Thus there is good reason for investigating the mind.

Great emptiness (*stong chen po*) itself, which is not found to be anything through investigation, is beyond all extremes of elaborations and transcends being an object expressible by speech or thought. This is not just an emptiness that is a refutation; an emptiness that simply consists of the thought of its being so; a partial emptiness;[a] or a conceptually imputed assertion that dharmatā is the ultimate expanse. You should recognize that the primordial expanse, the essence of the true reality (*yang dag pa'i don*), is great emptiness.

Previously, by not seeing emptiness to be emptiness and the absence of a self-entity to be an absence of a self-entity, you wandered in saṃsāra. Now, through the power of the glorious guru's key instructions, you see directly, in a nonseeing manner, the unmistaken abiding nature of emptiness, your primordial basic state. Rest without contrivance within that.

iii) Pointing Out Emptiness to Be Spontaneously Present

Teaching Session 56 & Meditation Session 44

Without moving from dharmatā, which is always empty like space,
mind arises unceasingly as expressive power and radiance (*rtsal* 102f
gdangs), manifesting as the variety [of appearances]. These various aspects that arise are, at the very moment of their arising, great emptiness. Therefore, [great emptiness] is called the inseparability of appearances and emptiness, awareness and emptiness, luminosity and emptiness, and bliss and emptiness.

Someone might question this, saying, "It is not possible for appearances and emptiness to be inseparable. The two must be dif-

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a. Emptiness that is a refutation (*rnam par bkag pa'i stong nyid*) is emptiness as a nonaffirming negation (i.e., a negation that does not imply anything positive in its place). It is an emptiness that merely cancels true existence, the object to be negated.

Emptiness that simply consists of the thought of its being so (*yin snyam can gyi stong nyid*) means simply to have the idea or belief that something is empty without basing this on analysis or correct reasonings.

Partial emptiness (*nyi tshe ba'i stong nyid*) refers to the realization generated by a nonaffirming negation. It is a temporary understanding of emptiness that is all that beginners are capable of realizing. (KTGR) It can also refer to emptiness as realized by shrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. (DPR)

ferent. This is because, were this not the case, something that does not exist would appear, and something that does exist would be nonexistent."[a]

Phenomena—whatever can be objects of knowledge—are neither an emptiness that is other than appearances nor appearances that are other than emptiness. Right at the very moment of appearing, all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are great emptiness that does not exist as anything. Without moving from that emptiness, [phenomena] arise as the unceasing and varied expressive power. This spontaneously present inseparability of appearances and emptiness is called "emptiness endowed with the supreme of all aspects"† (*rnam kun mchog ldan gyi stong nyid*). Since it is not suitable to hold exclusively to the facet of emptiness (*stong phyogs*), you must realize the abiding nature, the spontaneously present union [of appearances and emptiness].

Someone [may object] further, saying, "Although pure [appearances] are referred to as spontaneously present, it is not justifiable to say that impure appearances are spontaneously present." Since [such a statement] involves a conceptual mind fixating on
102b good and bad, supreme and inferior, that is impure.

The essence of the single intention of all sūtras and tantras has been taught to be spontaneous presence:† that all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, while not moving from emptiness itself, arise unceasingly as the expressive power and radiance [of mind]. Practice accordingly. For that reason, whatever is spontaneously present is the ultimate purity, called "great liberation" (*rnam grol chen po*).

iv) POINTING OUT SPONTANEOUS PRESENCE TO BE SELF-LIBERATED

Teaching Session 57 & Meditation Session 45

The abiding nature—the spontaneous presence of appearances, awareness, and emptiness as the primordial union of luminosity and emptiness—is the equal taste of all phenomena comprising

a. In this context, "exist" (*yod pa*) and "appear" (*snang ba*) are equivalent, and "not exist" (*med pa*) and "emptiness" (*stong pa*) are equivalent. (KTGR)

saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. This basic nature of things has no faulty aspect to be removed or positive aspect to be added. It is primordial great awakening, which is without even the slightest [thing] to decrease, increase, abandon, or adopt. You must directly realize this ultimate expanse, the unmistaken abiding nature.

Because this is the reality in which there is nothing to be rejected or adopted, eliminated or produced, it is called "self-liberated." As this does not rely upon any other remedies, it is the great 103f
self-liberation. Realize the essence of reality (*don gyi snying po*) through liberating the characteristics of hope and fear in their own place. It is said:

> Whatever is a cause that binds
> Is the path that liberates.
> Here there is no bondage whatsoever;
> Whatever binds liberates.

The methods for discovering your own mind to be the unsurpassable buddha are the perfect key instructions that point out [the nature of mind]. The unmistaken recognition [of these] brings about the attainment of the true knowledge of vipashyanā. Here the realization of the essence of vipashyanā refers to seeing, realizing, and manifesting the ultimate unmistaken abiding nature. Just having an intellectual understanding that knows all phenomena to be mind, or merely seeing emptiness, or just barely seeing the abiding nature, which is union, does not serve as seeing the true abiding nature.

[REMARKS FOR GURUS]

Therefore, [a guru] must recognize the proper time and give these [pointing-out instructions] to fortunate beings using a variety of symbols (*brda*), methods (*thabs*), and illustrations (*mtshon pa'i rnam pa*). Nevertheless, you must be aware that [the abiding nature of mind] is beyond being an object expressible through speech or thought. There is no analogy that can [truly] illustrate it, such that you can say, "It is like this." It is not anything at all, but can be 103b
anything. Free from all extremes, it is equality—that which is experienced only by reflexively aware wisdom itself (*so so rang rig pa'i ye shes*). In this way, it resembles space.

[QUOTATIONS: VIPASHYANĀ MEDITATION]

Teaching Session 58

The [following] quotations that illustrate these [teachings] are clear, gradual [presentations] found in the sūtras, tantras, key instructions, and teachings of genuine gurus. Tilopa[235] stated:

For example,
The nature of space transcends color and shape.
Not stained by what is white or black, it does not change.[236]
Similarly, the essence of your own mind transcends color and shape,
And is not stained by white or black phenomena, virtue or evil.

He continued:[237]

For example,
Although the label "empty" is applied to space,
Space cannot be described as such.
Similarly, although your mind is described as "luminous,"
There is no basis of designation† for any label, which says, "It exists like this."[238]
From the beginning, the nature of mind is like space.[239]
There are no phenomena not contained there.

And finally:[240]

When mind is without reference point, that is mahāmudrā.
When you are accustomed to and familiar with this, unsurpassable awakening is attained.

104a Saraha taught:

Mind is the root of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
Realizing this, rest loosely without meditating.[241]
To leave aside your own [nature] and search elsewhere is extremely deluded.

It is neither something nor is it not-something: everything is within the intrinsic state.

Shāntarakṣhita commented:

Without moving from the expanse of equality, various magical displays manifest.
All the various streams have the same salty taste in the ocean.
The many are of one taste: they have no differences.
Everything and all are blissful, being pervaded by the taste of the intrinsic state.

Nyime Tsal advised:

The varieties [of appearances] are the magical display of mind.
Mind cannot be shown by saying, "This is it."
Thus saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are free from a root.
Recognize this to be the dharmakāya.

Ḍombīpa said:

[Cyclic] existence and peace are equal and free from elaborations.
To make efforts—how very exhausting.
Body and mind are nondual and transparent;
To hold them as different—how very afflicting.
Self and other are nondual [within] the dharmakāya;
To take them as good or bad—how very pitiful.

Nyima Bepa proclaimed:

Looking at the body, nonarising [is seen].
Looking at mind, freedom from elaborations [is seen]. 104b
This nondual nature is beyond the conceptual mind.
I know nothing at all.

Maitrīpa explained:

All phenomena are empty of an essence of their own;
And the mind that conceives of emptiness is pure in its own place.

Being free from the conceptual mind and without
mental activity
Is the path of all buddhas.

The exalted Götsangpa instructed:

Look directly at your own mind.
You will not see it by looking—it is not a thing.

Ling-je Repa commented:

Mind, other than being left just as it is,
Is not something contrived by remedies.
Doubts about it being or not being something vanish.

Tsangpa Gyare concurred:

Mind, left just as it is, is the dharmakāya.
Thoughts, created by the intellect, are liberated in
their own place.
Practice this inconceivable point.

Orgyenpa taught:

There are no appearances anywhere that are not
mind.
The manifestations of deluded habitual tendencies
Do not exist as real things.
The nature of everything is empty in its own place,
The state of equality, the dharmakāya.
This resembles unborn space.

And further:

All phenomena are like reflections;
If you see them as real, they are mistaken reflexive appearances.
105f All that appears is the play of mind;
If you take them to be [real] objects, they are mistaken reflexive appearances.
Everything is an illusory magical display;
If you take them to be [real] things, they are mistaken
reflexive appearances.

Orgyenpa, the beggar of snowy Tibet, continued:

Train in wisdom, the intrinsic state.
Through the blessings of the glorious guru
Delusive habitual tendencies are brought to their own
place.

Train in the nonduality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
Everything arises as the play of the dharmakāya.
Dualistic perception is brought to the place of exhaustion.
There is no suffering—this is happiness.

The unborn Shang explained:

The instant of immediately recognizing a thought is called "realizing mahāmudrā." It is also known as "samādhi arising in the mind-stream" and "the development of meditation."[a] In the very instant that a thought[242] is recognized, all negative actions accumulated throughout beginningless saṃsāra are overcome and purified.

What is called "recognizing a thought" means you clearly give rise to the certainty that thoughts do not arise, do not cease, and do not abide; that they
are not things, are unidentifiable, and are like space. 105b
This is called "the simultaneous arising of experience and realization." It is also called "the blending of experiences and realizations"; "the inseparability of shamatha and vipashyanā"; "the actualization of dharmatā"; and "the liberation of characteristics in their own place."

This [i.e., mahāmudrā] is not realized through extensive study. It is not realized through great knowledge. It is not realized through coarse analysis. It is not realized through expertise in the key instructions. It is not realized through force or effort. It is not

a. "The development of meditation" (*sgom byung*) can also mean "what develops from meditation," e.g., yogic direct valid cognition (*rnal 'byor mngon sum tshad ma*). (DPR)

realized through methods or symbolic instructions. It is not realized through any of these kinds of busy activities. It is said in a tantra:

> It is not found anywhere.

You may wonder, however, "If it is not realized through any of those [means], what should I do?" You should rely solely upon blessings, because it is through [receiving] a realized guru's blessings that your own [nature] is reflexively recognized and arises from within. It is said in one of the tantras:

> Since this reflexively aware wisdom
> Is beyond the scope of speech,
> It is [realized] gradually through blessings,
> Like omniscient wisdom.

Dakpo Rinpoche stated:

> Become familiar with looking at your own mind.
> 106f When you are familiar with looking at your mind,
> If you do not fall into the duality of objects and mind,
> You will experience nondual wisdom.
> Special methods are given [for this];
> The moment of its attainment is [also] taught.

He also said:

> Meditation that is not free from dualistic perception
> Is experience, but it does not see reality.
> The view that lacks realization
> Is conceptually created even though it is called "free from extremes."

It is taught in the *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*:

> Sentient beings say, "I see space."
> How is space seen? Examine this point.
> Likewise, the Tathāgata taught that this is how to see [the nature of] phenomena.
> No other example can express such seeing.

It says in the *Origin of Saṃvara Tantra*:[243]

> When it is taught that mental factors are mind,
> That [expresses] just what the nature of beings is.[244]
> This resembles space and abides perfectly as space.
> Like the brilliance of a crystal or a jewel,
> [It manifests in] beginningless and endless forms,
> Is free from elaborations and beyond the sense's domain.
> It is unchanging and does not appear.
> Everything is empty; there are no mental afflictions.

The *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way, Called "Wisdom"*[245] says:

> To say "existence" is a view of permanence.
> To say "nonexistence" is a nihilistic view.
> Therefore the wise do not abide in either 106b
> Existence or nonexistence.

It also says:

> What arises dependently....[246]

It is also said:

> To say "existence" or "nonexistence" is an extreme.
> Empty and not empty are also extremes.
> Abandoning both such extremes,
> The wise do not even abide in a middle.

And further:

> By gazing into the center of space, seeing ceases.
> Likewise, when mind looks at mind,
> Thoughts cease and unexcelled awakening is attained.

And finally:[247]

> Nowhere in the worlds
> Can a buddha be found somewhere else—
> The mind is the perfect buddha.

There are similar teachings in all the sūtras, tantras, and key instructions.

PART III

THE CONCLUDING TOPICS

Having experienced[248] the essence [of mind] as pointed out by the guru, [there are four points to be considered]:

A. The Way to Enhance the Development [of One's Practice] and Become Proficient in It
B. Removing Hindrances
C. The Way to Progress on the Path
D. The Way the Result Manifests

Enhancing Practice

A. The Way to Enhance the Development [of One's Practice] and Become Proficient in It

[This has four parts:

1. Correcting the Five Types of Mistaken Ideas
2. Training in the Three Skills
3. Eliminating Deviations and Strayings
4. Crossing the Three Difficult Passages]

From among these many ways to enhance [practice], the first is:

1. Enhancing Development through Correcting the Five Types of Mistaken Ideas

[This has five sections:

a) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Objects

b) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Time

c) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about the Essence

d) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about the Nature

e) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Knowledge]

a) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Objects

Teaching Session 59

It is, in truth, incorrect to fixate upon nonvirtue (such as the three 107(

poisons)† as something to be rejected, or virtue (such as generosity) as something to be adopted or attained: in this system, the five poisons should be taken as the path. Moreover, in terms of the abiding nature of mahāmudrā, the factors to be abandoned or adopted have absolutely never existed as real things. Practitioners who strive for the profound nature should abandon fixating on the rejection or adoption of phenomena and should abandon solidifying something to be accomplished. As it is said:[249]

> Even making tens of thousands of offerings to deities
> Will bind you—so what is the point?

There are infinite such sayings that [confirm] the inappropriateness of fixated attachments. Nevertheless, even though you may be free from fixations, karmic causes and results must not be denied. In brief, by [recognizing] that the multiplicity of dualistic phenomena—saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, virtue and evil, [the factors] to be rejected and adopted—are of equal taste in nondual wisdom, mistaken ideas about objects are corrected.

107b

b) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT TIME

Teaching Session 60

It is incorrect to think, "I will become fully awakened at such and such a time," or to believe that you must progress [on the path for a specific amount of time], such as for countless [aeons]: the individual who [wishes] to penetrate the essential point of mahāmudrā must realize the equality of the three times. The divisions of the three times (past, present, and future) are simply the imputations of ignorant fools. The past does not exist as past because it was the present [once] and even the future [in relationship] to what preceded it. The same applies to the future and present. Moreover, in this dharma system, realization occurs in the present, in this very sitting.

Therefore, since the three times do not exist as separate [entities], their equality must be realized. Yogins and yoginīs who have manifested this are able to bless a great aeon into an instant and an instant into a great aeon. This occurs from the perspective of the equality [of the three times]; if they were separate [entities], it would not be possible. It is said:[250]

> The one who realizes that the three times are not
> [truly] existent time....

Recognizing the definitive [quality] of the abiding nature to be this 108a
way will free you from the mistaken concept that time has autonomous existence, as when you think, "I will attain awakening at such and such a particular moment."

c) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT THE ESSENCE

Teaching Session 61

Other systems assert that once the negative mind of the present moment is abandoned, a positive wisdom is attained. In this dharma system, however, since the root of all phenomena is mind, it is not to be cast away. It is incorrect to assert that wisdom exists anywhere other than within the mind: your own mind spontaneously exists, from the beginning, as the nature of the five wisdoms. This is the unmistaken certainty of the profound Secret Mantra. In this regard, Shang Rinpoche stated:

> If fire has fuel it will blaze.
> If a lotus is submerged in mud it will grow.
> If crops are supplied with water and manure they will
> flourish.
> Once mental afflictions are abandoned,
> There isn't even the name "wisdom."

Furthermore, the essence of mind manifests unceasingly as the expressive power of clarity, awareness, and emptiness; this is mirror-
like wisdom. That essence is of equal taste with emptiness; this is 108b
the wisdom of equality. This lacks any inherent nature and yet it manifests distinctly as various [appearances]; this is discriminating wisdom. Being inseparable from the primordial expanse of all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the suchness that transcends all descriptions, it is the wisdom of the dharmadhātu. When this mind is realized, the key point of all phenomena is realized, thereby all aims and results are achieved; thus [the essence of mind] is the wisdom that accomplishes activities. You should know that your own mind is the essence of, or possesses the nature (*bdag nyid*) of, all the infinite wisdoms of the victorious ones.

This is the method for eradicating any fixation on impurity and will remove all mistaken ideas about the essence [of mind].

d) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT THE NATURE

Teaching Session 62

The skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas of sentient beings are, primordially, awakened. They are of the nature of the male and female tathāgata buddhas and the male and female deities according to the teachings of the sūtras and tantras. Thus [all beings] are buddhas. To assert that there is a superior buddhahood to be attained
109f that is other than mind, to consider it impossible for completely pure buddhahood to exist within the mind-streams of impure sentient beings, or to misinterpret the vajra words of the Secret Mantra and so forth, saying that they are simply about a transformation into purity, are all incorrect because they are a perversion of the meaning of the abiding nature. They are extremely illogical because they are misinterpretations of the Sugata's words and are like seeing bliss-bestowing nectar or a wish-fulfilling jewel as poison or an abyss and feeling afraid and anxious. This can be illustrated by the examples of a poor person who has a treasure in her house or the wrestler[a] who has a jewel on his person; not knowing this, both search elsewhere [for their wealth].

The unerring definitive secret is that all the excellent qualities of the buddhas (such as the sixty-four qualities of separation and maturation) are spontaneously present within your own vajra body and mind. Therefore, do not search for buddhahood other than within the mind. As is said:

> Outside of the precious mind
> There are no buddhas or sentient beings.

a. The story about the wrestler (*gyad*) appears in the vinaya. A wrestler who had a jewel in his hair was fighting with other wrestlers. He received a punch in the forehead and the jewel fell into the wound on his forehead, without him realizing it. When the wound healed, the jewel was in the wound, causing him to think that he had lost it. He then wandered about looking for his jewel, not realizing that he had it with him all the time. (KTGR & DPR)

And it is said in the *Sampuṭa Tantra*:

> The buddha abides in your own body; 109b
> There is no buddha anywhere else.
> Those who are obscured by ignorance and delusion
> Believe that the buddha is somewhere other than the body.

It is also said:[251]

> Nowhere in the world
> Can a buddha be found somewhere else—
> The mind is the perfect buddha.

It is said in the *Wisdom of the Moment of Passing Sūtra*:[252]

> When the mind is realized, that is the buddha. Meditate with the recognition that there is nowhere else to seek the buddha.

There are countless such teachings. Here, except for the slight [difference] between [the one] having realization and [the other] not, there is no qualitative distinction at all to be made between buddhas and sentient beings.

e) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE

Teaching Session 63

The final ultimate nature is the mind-itself. This is reflexively aware wisdom itself, which is the single practice that combines [all practices]. It is realized through the force of meditation, the force of [receiving] the blessings of a genuine guru and training with his or her instructions, and the force of being a fortunate individual endowed with diligence, faith, and devotion, as well as possessing an altruistic attitude. However, you cannot realize this [wisdom] through merely listening and reflecting, examining and analyzing,
being very knowledgeable, having a sharp intellect, being skilled in 110f
exposition, being an excellent teacher or logician, and the like. To quote from the *Sūtra of the Arrayed Bouquet*,[253] beginning with:

> The teachings of the perfect Buddha
> Are not realized by simply hearing them.

For example, someone may be helplessly
Carried away by a river
But still die of thirst.
Not to meditate on the dharma is like that.

And ending:

Someone [may stand] at the crossroads
And wish [everyone] prosperity,
But they won't receive any of it themselves.
Not to meditate on the dharma is like that.

Shang Rinpoche taught:

The dawning of the wisdom of realization
Does not come from strong yearning;
It does not come from analytical expertise;
It is not known through extensive study;
And it is not within the scope of logicians.

He explained further:

The spontaneous arising of the wisdom of realization
Does not come from
Having strong yearning or being relaxed,
Being skilled in analysis or not,
Having studied a lot or a little,
Being intelligent or stupid,
Having good experiences or bad,
110b Being extremely diligent or not.
It is recognized by relying on the timing and methods
of the guru
And on your own merit.

"Relying on the timing and methods of a guru"
[means]
It arises through the force of the blessings of
A realized guru [whom you have] pleased.
"Your own merit" [means]
It arises for those with the continuity of training.†

Therefore, because the wisdom of realization

Relies on the path of blessings,
It is within the scope of those with faith,
It arises for those with respect,
And is realized by those who have trained.
Diligence assists all these.
It is seen by fortunate ones of the highest ability;
[But] it does not fit into the minds of word-experts.

For such fortunate individuals
The realization of nonduality arises.
With the blessings of a genuine guru,
The dharmakāya spreads within the middle of realization,
Nonduality arises within the middle of mind-itself,
Wisdom dawns within the middle of mental afflictions, and
Realization shines within the middle of experiences.

These and other sayings are found in the Kagyü teachings as well as in the sūtras and tantras.

The usual [way to teach] the Concluding Topics up to this point is [to present] each of the five sections of Correcting Misconceptions in one session. Thus this is teaching session 63. To abbreviate, present the five together in one [session]. Then [everything up to] this point would be one session.

2. Training in the Three Skills

This has three parts:

a) [In the Beginning: The Skill in Initiating Meditation

b) In the Middle: The Skill in Suspending Meditation

c) In the End: The Skill in Sustaining Experiences]

a) In the Beginning: [The Skill in Initiating Meditation]

Teaching Session 64

Maintain the essential points for the body flawlessly, as was explained above. [Apply] the methods for resting the mind: when 111a

your mind is active with thoughts, look right at the essence of those thoughts; when it rests, look right at the essence of that resting. This accords with the methods for resting explained above. As is said in the oral tradition:

> Yogin and yoginī: let your mind be loose,
> Like a Brahman skilled in spinning threads.
>
> Rest undistracted in clarity but without thoughts,
> Like a candle flame unmoved by wind.
>
> Let the mind engaging with objects be unrestrained,
> Like a crow set free from a ship.
>
> Let whatever appears be mahāmudrā,
> Like flames spreading through a forest.
>
> Let all appearances be mahāmudrā,
> Like the stars and planets reflected in the ocean.
>
> Yogins and yoginīs: let your mind be comfortable
> wherever it goes,
> Like an expert [trainer] guiding an elephant.
>
> Always rest mind-itself in the dharmakāya,
> Like the continuous flow of falling water.
>
> Yogins and yoginīs: rely on sense pleasures,
> Like crops rely upon water and manure.

Rest within an uncontrived and fresh, relaxed and naturally settled
111b (*rang babs*) state, without allowing the nonconceptual mind to wander. This is the first point, called "the skill in initiating meditation."

b) IN THE MIDDLE: THE SKILL IN SUSPENDING MEDITATION

No matter what you are resting [your mind] on, do not make the length of time the main point. You should not persist in one type of samādhi or physical posture; alter them. Meditate with clarity, frequently for short periods, and do not leave your meditation hating it. Generate enthusiasm and suspend[254] your meditation on a good note: when it is sharp, lucid clarity (*gsal dangs ngar dang bcas pa*).

c) IN THE END: THE SKILL IN SUSTAINING EXPERIENCES

No matter what experiences arise—bliss (*bde*), clarity (*gsal*), or nonconceptuality (*mi rtog pa*)—do not cling to them, and definitely do not allow any thoughts—good, bad, or neutral—to taint them. The force of realization[255] will give rise to experiences, which is known as "attaining experiences through realizations." You should be free from any fixation on experiences. Since the opposite of that [will result in] what is known as "losing realizations after experiences,"[a] you should be skilled in sustaining experiences without any attachment to them.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EXPERIENCE AND REALIZATION

Experiences are not stable because they do not go beyond being an aspect of the conceptual mind. Like the sun in the midst of clouds, the three [experiences of] bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality will sometimes all occur to an elevated degree, sometimes just one of
them is heightened, and at other times, none of them will arise. 112a
However, by sustaining them without any fixation, the stains of conceptual mind will become transparent (*dangs*) and realization will arise from where it has always been.

Moreover, if [bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality] are experienced as an object aspect and a subject aspect (*yul yul can*), that is experience. If they arise without being objects, that is realization. If they are experienced by the mind, that is experience. If the mind itself arises as their nature, that is realization. If they are experienced as aspects of objects (*don gyi rnam pa*), that is experience. If their specific characteristics (*rang mtshan*) are directly recognized—that is, if the distinguishing [features] of the objects (*don*

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a. If you are attached to experiences, the "realizations" that generated the experiences will be lost or impaired. In this context, "realization" (*rtogs pa*) means the certainty that occurs on the path of preparation, or the "realization" that arises due to inference (*rjes dpag gi rtogs pa*). (KTGR)

gyi khyad pa) are realized—that is realization. If there is a meditator, your own mind, and if meditative bliss, clarity, nonconceptuality, or emptiness are objects of meditation or objects that are felt, that is experience. If the nonduality of a meditator and the meditation is directly recognized, without being mentally fabricated or being simply an intellectual understanding, that is realization.

This can be presented as one session, but it is also fine not to do that.

[THE THREE EXPERIENCES]

There are three types of experiences that arise: bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality.

[The Experiences of] Bliss

Physical bliss is initially mixed with the mental afflictions. Then bliss free from the mental afflictions will pervade the whole body. In the end, a pervasive blissful feeling (*bde phril ba*) will arise even with the sensations of hot or cold and the like.

Mental bliss is a joyful, contented state of mind, free from all mental pain. It is a delighted state—vivid and crisp (*seng nge ye re*
112b *ba*) and very clear—and [yet] this vibrant (*sing nge ba*) joy is not identified as anything.

You might develop over-confidence, thinking, "Now I have absolutely no mental afflictions, I am a noble being." Or you may laugh for no reason. You might think, "The guru is very kind. There is no one happier than me." You may think of giving everything up, feel that you have no needs at all, and think that the only thing to do is dharma.

You may wish to dance or long to shout for no reason. Sometimes you might not want to meditate or do anything at all, and you may think that your meditation will never develop. You may feel that you have deviated into a lost, blank state, and that your mental afflictions have increased. It might seem as if your mind is only very dull or very agitated. You may not be able to remember anything, you might feel like crying, or think that it seems as if meditation will not arise.

The Experiences of Clarity

[Various] visual objects may arise as signs that the mind has settled in the clarity aspect of the five sense consciousnesses: smoke, fireflies, mirages, candle flames, the light of the moon, the sun, or fire; also bindus, balls of light, rainbows, and so forth. In addition, you may be able to see clearly even with your eyes closed. There are many things you might see and experience, such as various beings or movement,[a] forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects.

[The experiences of] the clarity aspect of the mental [consciousness] may manifest in various ways: thoughts of abandoning or applying remedies[256] may manifest; your awareness may be crisp (*si li li*); or your understanding might accord with dependent origination. Your [mind] might be lucid, clear, and free from drowsi- 113a
ness, and you may think you know all phenomena.

[The Experiences of Nonconceptuality]

At first, your mind will settle wherever you direct [your attention]. Then, coarse thoughts will cease, and [your mind] will remain where it is placed. In the end, you might think that all conceptual formations are pacified.

[SUMMARY]

If you have such experiences, fixate on them, and become proud, this is called "losing realization[257] after experiences"; therefore, you should abandon clinging to those [experiences]. It is said:

> Anything can grow in the ground in the summer,
> Anything arises as experience for a yogin or yoginī.

There is no specific order in which experiences will arise, and it is unreasonable to fixate upon them. As is said:

> Give up whatever you are attached to.

You should abandon such things as clinging to those [experiences], feeling conceited about them, or taking them to be superior.

a. Beings or movement (*'gro ba*): This one word in Tibetan, *'gro ba*, can either mean "beings" (literally, "those who go") or "movement," as in the movement of bindus. (KTGR)

Within that state, you should recognize that the nonarising of the mind-itself is the dharmakāya; its nonabiding is the sambhogakāya; and its being free from arising and ceasing and yet manifesting in various ways is the nirmāṇakāya. The inseparability of those three is the svabhāvakāya. Recognize that the present moment of mind is of the essential nature of the four kāyas.

Another [way to express this] is that the unceasing appearances of the expressive power of mind is the nirmāṇakāya; its aware-
113b ness and clarity is the sambhogakāya; its emptiness is the svabhāvakāya; and the inseparability of these is the dharmakāya.

In brief, all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are completely contained within the five kāyas or within the dharmakāya (which contains the sambhogakāya, nirmāṇakāya, svabhāvakāya, and so forth). It is said:

> Because it is the basis of all phenomena,
> Because it has all infinite excellent qualities,
> And because its nature accords with awareness,
> It is asserted to be the dharmakāya of the protectors.

You should be certain that [the other kāyas] are of that nature, which is called "the dharmakāya endowed with twofold purity"† (*dag pa gnyis ldan gyi chos sku*).

Furthermore, you should determine that the nature of all phenomena is free from arising, abiding, and ceasing; that it does not exist as anything; and that it is free from all extremes such as existence or nonexistence. Do not hope to attain buddhahood or gain special experiences and realizations. Do not fear wandering in saṃsāra, or that experiences and realizations will not arise in your mind-stream. In brief, give up all hope and fear.

To combine [these sections], present Correcting the Five Misconceptions in one session and the Three Skills in one session, including [everything up to here] in two sessions.

3. ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ELIMINATING DEVIATIONS AND STRAYINGS

This has two parts:

a) [Eliminating the Four] Deviations

b) Eliminating Strayings

a) [ELIMINATING THE FOUR] DEVIATIONS

i) Deviating from Emptiness As the Basic Nature of Objects of Knowledge 114a

ii) Deviating from Emptiness As the Seal

iii) Deviating from Emptiness As the Remedy

iv) Deviating from Emptiness As the Path

i) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE BASIC NATURE OF OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

Teaching Session 65

Having heard and reflected upon numerous scriptures and reasonings (such as the reasoning establishing the lack of being one or many), you might think and meditate that what is known conventionally as "the ultimate," "mahāmudrā," or "the abiding nature of things," is an emptiness that is the lack of an inherent nature in all phenomena. When meditating with reliance upon the guru's instructions, you might say, "This does not differ from my earlier realization." You might become glib, inebriated, and boastful[a] in your denial of virtue and evil. You may say, "Because everything is only the dharmakāya or emptiness, and there are no phenomena that exist separately from that, what is there to meditate on?" You conceptually create that [idea], "establishing" it. Your previous understanding based on scriptures and reasonings will decrease and meditation experiences will not arise. This is "deviating from emptiness as the basic nature of objects of knowledge."

Why is this called "deviating from the basic nature of objects of knowledge"? The main subject of a reason (such as the lack of being one or many) is the emptiness that is the basic nature of objects of knowledge. Although it is present from the beginning, to grasp it by thinking, "It is this," is not the correct path since that
involves the defilement of being conceptually created. Do not de- 114b

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a. Inebriated and boastful (*ra rog phad rog*): This is a colloquial phrase. *Ra rog* is based on *ra ro*, to be intoxicated; and *phad rog* means to be boastful. It conveys the sense of being numb and jaded. In this case, the person is "numb" to virtue and nonvirtue. (DPR)

viate in that way.

The fundamental deviation (*ye shor*) is to consider that emptiness—the basic nature of objects of knowledge—is an absence or nonexistence. The temporary deviation (*'phral shor*) is a dry, hollow emptiness,† which is an intellectual object. These are corrected [respectively] through understanding the dependent origination of unceasing relative [appearances], and "bringing rock to meet bone" in meditation.

ii) Deviating from Emptiness As the Seal

Teaching Session 66

You might think, "I have practiced with body and speech whatever conditioned virtues I could. Now, by meditating upon profound, unconditioned emptiness, I will remain in the expanse of threefold purity† (*'khor gsum yongs dag*)." You might, on the basis of scriptures and reasonings, engage in analysis as the remedy for fixating on characteristics, which reifies virtuous phenomena. You may determine that [such things] do not exist by means of investigation. Or you might make things [that you take to be] nonempty nonexistent with the SHŪNYATĀ or SVABHĀVA mantras, and so your meditation upon emptiness is a meditation on a partial emptiness. Or, embraced by knowledge of threefold purity, you may fabricate the lack of an inherent nature. In any case, first you conceive of things as endowed with [inherent] characteristics, and then you [conceptually] "seal" them as empty, as lacking an inherent na-
115f ture. Having "sealed" appearances with emptiness, you meditate, for example, by doing generation-stage practice. Then you seal that with emptiness, thinking that it has become empty. Such meditations are called "deviating from emptiness as the seal."

Do not annihilate appearances in emptiness by making an effort: at the very moment of their unceasing manifestation, appearances provide the occasion for emptiness. Rest within what is called "the inseparability of appearances and emptiness, unification without any inherent nature."

The fundamental deviation from emptiness as the seal is to put the seal of nonreferential (*dmigs med*) emptiness on virtue and its characteristics. The temporary deviation is the sealing of a jaded [practitioner] whose meditation experiences have disappeared and become just wishful thinking. Those of lesser intelligence apply the "patch" of dharmakāya to appearances and mind. These three will be corrected [respectively] by looking at the very nature (*rang shal*) of the remedy, developing renunciation and revitalizing practice, and sustaining the essence of ordinary mind.

iii) Deviating from Emptiness As the Remedy

Teaching Session 67

When negative thoughts, such as those involving the three poisons, arise you might think, "These are impure and are stealing the life-force of liberation. I will destroy them with emptiness." You then decide that mental afflictions are empty and meditate on
them as nonexistent. Or, having received instructions from the 115h
guru, you may have realized emptiness a little bit and make it into a remedy. You might think, "Once I have abandoned mental afflictions and thoughts, I will attain something supreme, such as the ultimate state or buddhahood." You meditate on nonconceptuality as the remedy for concepts. Such [approaches] are called "deviating from emptiness as the remedy."[258]

Buddhahood will not be created somewhere else by abandoning mental afflictions and thoughts. Rest without contrivance within whatever arises, just as it appears, without making any divisions, such as [considering] some things as supreme and others as inferior, one thing as an object to be invalidated and something else as what invalidates.

The fundamental deviation from emptiness as the remedy is to believe that emptiness, as one thing, destroys mental afflictions, which are something separate. The temporary deviation is to meditate upon emptiness as the remedy[259] for thoughts, pulling them in, as an iron hook pulls something in. These are corrected [respectively] by looking at the very nature of what is to be abandoned, and by looking without effort at whatever arises.

iv) Deviating from Emptiness As the Path

Teaching Session 68

You might believe that the entire path is realized only through emptiness and disregard the aspect of skillful methods. In terms of

emptiness, there is no separation between path and result. Still you may think, "This present meditation on emptiness serves as the
116f path. Later I will attain the result, buddhahood endowed with the three kāyas and five wisdoms." You also might think, "By meditating upon emptiness, I will attain the result of the ten bhūmis, five paths,† four yogas,† and so forth." Such [ideas] are called "deviating from emptiness as the path" and are to be given up.

When you realize your own mind, that is the dharmakāya. Since all phenomena spontaneously exist as the four kāyas and five wisdoms from the beginning, there is no buddha to discover anew. Therefore you should rest within the state of great equality.

The fundamental deviation from emptiness as the path is to assert that by meditating on emptiness the dharmakāya is subsequently attained. The temporary deviation is [to think that] whatever arises cannot serve as meditation and to meditate on conceptually created designs. These are corrected [respectively] by recognizing the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, and by cutting through any fabricated strivings.

[SUMMARY]

Not deviating in relation to the basic nature, the seal, the remedy, or the path, you should rest evenly within the self-arisen, spontaneously present state of equality, great bliss.

However, if you wonder whether these conceptually contrived meditations on emptiness, which are the four types of deviation, are always inappropriate, [the answer is] no. Beginners are first
116b told that all phenomena are empty of an essence and are peace. If this is not conceptually created and meditated upon, immature beings will be unable to engage with emptiness due to their excessive fear about it. It is not contradictory for them to be guided with graduated methods, such as [those found in] the scriptures and reasonings, and to meditate [accordingly].

To meditate on [emptiness] as the remedy for karma and mental afflictions, to take it as the path, and to conceptually seal contrived [practices] as uncontrived [emptiness], gradually becoming familiar with these, is fine. These must, however, ultimately be discarded.

Therefore, the object of meditation for a beginner and the object of meditation for one of superior abilities will differ in the beginning, just as an adult's food is not suitable for a small child. In brief, it is important that the meditation accord with the mental capacity of the individual.

In the end, the best way to enhance the development [of practice] is not to stray into the four types of deviations and to realize the unmistaken abiding nature that is the view.

> These are the ways to enhance the development [of practice] by eliminating the four deviations in terms of the view; they will enhance the development of vipashyanā. In an extensive [presentation], each of the four [Eliminating] Deviations are [taught] separately. Thus this is teaching session 68. To combine [these sections, present Eliminating]
> the Four Deviations together as one [session]. 117f

b) ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ELIMINATING STRAYINGS IN MEDITATION

Teaching Session 69

1. There are three types of experience: bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality. When bliss is the strongest experience, examine with knowledge the general state of bliss, without distinguishing between defiled and undefiled bliss.

2. If one completely fixates on that [bliss] during meditation, one will stray into the desire realm due to one's constant entanglement with attachment to desire. However, although one is fixated on that [bliss] and thereby strays, one will not be born in any of the ten lower states† found in the twenty levels of the desire realm.†

3. In the same way, if one fixates exclusively on experiences of clarity, one will stray into one of the seventeen levels of the form realm.†

4. Likewise, fixation on nonconceptuality will cause one to stray into one of the four spheres of the formless realm.

5. If one says, "All phenomena are like space since they are without color or shape, edge or center," and one analyzes with one's knowledge that all phenomena are like space, grasping at that and becoming completely fixated on it, one will stray into the sphere of Limitless Space.

6. It was said, "O sons and daughters of the victorious ones,

117b these three realms are only mind."[260] Consequently, if one thinks that all phenomena are just consciousness or mind and fixates upon only that as real, one will be born in the sphere of Limitless Consciousness.

7. In the same way, if one fixates on the thought that nothing exists, one will stray into the sphere of Nothingness.

8. If one fixates on the thought that there is neither existence nor nonexistence, taking this to be supreme, one will be born in the sphere of Neither Discrimination nor Nondiscrimination.

9. Therefore, in all these cases, no matter which of the experiences of bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality predominates, or even if they are equal, one should be without any sense of experiencing them or being attached to them. [These strayings] are corrected by looking at the very nature [of the experience].

10. If one lacks skill in the methods, such as great compassion, and fixates on emptiness alone, one will stray into the Hīnayāna. This should be abandoned because, as is said:

> To go to the hells
> Is not a lasting hindrance for awakening.
> But to be a shrāvaka or a pratyekabuddha
> Creates a lasting hindrance for the attainment of awakening.

This [straying] is corrected by being skilled in the methods and meditating on kindness, compassion, and bodhichitta.

11. Furthermore, the development of method is enhanced by knowledge. If one's virtuous qualities (such as generosity) are
118a not embraced by the knowledge that does not conceive of the three spheres,† they will not be undefiled. Therefore, [those qualities] must be embraced by [knowledge].

12. Similarly, if one possesses the pāramitā of knowledge through being skilled in the methods, this is referred to as "method enhancing the development of knowledge."

13. [By focusing on] emptiness alone, [one will] stray into the Hīnayāna, which will not be of great benefit to other beings. But [by focusing] only on compassion, vast benefit for others will not be accomplished either. Therefore, through uniting emptiness and compassion, each one will enhance the development of the other.

14. Shamatha alone, devoid of vipashyanā, is only a worldly path. But if vipashyanā arises, one will enter the path to liberation and the wisdom of vipashyanā will develop in one's mind-stream. Thus, the development of shamatha will be enhanced by vipashyanā.

15. However, if shamatha is missing, one will not attain mastery of vipashyanā and the excellent qualities (the supercognitions, magical powers, and so forth) will not manifest. Insofar as one's shamatha is excellent, the power of one's vipashyanā will gradually increase and be replete with excellent qualities. Therefore, the development of vipashyanā must be enhanced by shamatha.[261]

16. Although there are numerous [methods for] removing the hindrances to and enhancing the development of the four
yogas, I will not present them here for fear of being too wordy; 118b
however, they are clear elsewhere and are also found in all the older commentaries.

In terms of [the practice of] both shamatha and vipashyanā: On the level of one-pointedness, the development of experiences is enhanced by experiences. On the level of freedom from elaborations, the realization of emptiness develops proficiency (*rtsal sbyangs*) with appearances. Thus, the development of realization is enhanced by experiences. On the level of one taste, the realization of equality develops proficiency with compassion. Thus, the development of realization is enhanced by realization.

By developing proficiency in all areas of conduct and not letting one's three doors remain in their ordinary fashion, all activities are transformed into a panoply of virtues, thereby enhancing the ordinary state with excellent qualities.

17. Whatever mental afflictions, sufferings, obstacles, or problems arise, look at their very nature without accepting or rejecting them. By taking faults to be good qualities and bad

omens to be good luck, [one's practice] will be enhanced.

Further, when one's dharma practice is poor, in the very moment that one looks at it, a strong mental affliction or illness will not necessarily become dharma practice. By enduring those [problems] and continuing to stay with them, they will gradually loosen up and poor experiences in meditation will disappear (*stong sang*) without a trace.

Those [experiencing] a heightened state do not [need to] block their experiences, which will nakedly and vividly (*rjen*
119f *lhang lhang*) become self-empty. They should rest without contrivance in that fresh, relaxed natural (*rang ga*) state, as was explained above.

> In an extensive presentation, each of these seventeen points, such as Eliminating the Three Strayings and so forth, are necessary for enhancing [practice], eliminating strayings, and correcting faults. But if these faults of straying do not arise, there is no reason that you must definitely present all of the numbered points. The faults that do arise should be identified; the appropriate remedy should be taught to correct the fault and enhance practice; and hopes, fears, and deviations should be cut through. If all of these are included in [one] session, this is teaching session 69.

4. ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CROSSING THE THREE DIFFICULT PASSAGES

This has three parts:

a) Emptiness Arising As an Enemy

b) Compassion Arising As an Enemy

c) Cause and Result Arising As an Enemy

a) EMPTINESS ARISING AS AN ENEMY

Teaching Session 70

You have examined, analyzed, and investigated the essence of mind. By looking at its essence, you see that it does not truly exist as anything. You might conclude, "Since all phenomena are only emptiness, what point is there in performing any virtuous activity—physically, verbally, or mentally? Virtue and evil, and karmic causes and results, do not exist at all." You regard the remedies

and factors to be abandoned as not existent at all. This is known as "glibness" and is a perversion of the view and conduct. It is called "the straying where emptiness arises as an enemy." The *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way, Called "Wisdom"* states:[262]

> If emptiness is wrongly viewed,
> Those of small intellect are hurt.
> It is like holding a snake in the wrong way,
> Or practicing a spell incorrectly. 119b

Therefore, intelligent ones are not veiled by the faults of a nullifying (*had po*) view of emptiness. They recognize that there is no inherently existent nature, and yet they are also aware that the key point concerning the unceasing brilliance and expressive power of appearances is that on the relative level the dependent origination of causes and results and virtue and evil is infallible. The realization [of such persons] equals space, yet they train in unifying it with the positive interdependent connections of scrupulous conduct. While not moving from emptiness, they train in the path that integrates the view and conduct.

However, someone may ask, "Was it not taught above that there is nothing to reject or adopt?" That was [taught] to release you from fixating on remedies and the factors to be abandoned. This [is taught] in order to prevent that being taken too literally on the relative level or by beginners, which would cause glibness.

b) COMPASSION ARISING AS AN ENEMY

Teaching Session 71

Having achieved some bliss in samādhi, you may feel compassion for beings who lack that [bliss] and think, "If I do not liberate all sentient beings—if I simply liberate myself—I will not attain un-
surpassable awakening. I must work for the welfare of all beings." 120f
Putting aside your own [practice of] samādhi, you strenuously apply yourself to various kinds of conditioned virtues and exhaust yourself by taking yourself and all sentient beings to be real. This is called "compassion arising as an enemy."

When overwhelming compassion arises, remain in that state and integrate it with sustaining a stainless realization. Abandon the distractions of transitory busyness and, in an isolated place,

apply yourself to nothing but practice.

c) CAUSE AND RESULT ARISING AS AN ENEMY

Teaching Session 72

When you have determined the view but have not understood the profound key instructions through meditation, or when you see that everything is conceptually[263] created, you may think, "Now, in order to see the true reality, I must become knowledgeable in all areas of the sciences. I will then be able to determine the meaning of the abiding nature. Therefore, I must become well-informed about all objects of knowledge." Consequently, you take up such minor activities as [the study of] grammar, valid cognition, or crafts and put aside becoming proficient in shamatha and vipashyanā. This is called "the straying where an idea about cause and re-
120b sult arises as an enemy."

Identify these [ideas] and abandon them. By meditating one-pointedly upon the profound reality—the union of emptiness and compassion—the stainless knowledge that is not deluded about all the phenomena of saṃsāra or nirvāṇa will automatically arise. This is called "knowing one liberates all."

When the equality of emptiness and compassion has been realized, it is incorrect to fixate on any cause or result as being supreme and solidify it. Without fixating on anything, combine exertion with an uncontrived, carefree (*bag yangs*) enjoyment of the plain of luminous equality, your own mind.

These are the stages of enhancing the development [of one's practice] and becoming proficient in it.

In an extensive [presentation], the three Arising As an Enemy are taught in separate sessions. Thus this is teaching session 72. To abbreviate, combine the three Arising As an Enemy into one session.

REMOVING HINDRANCES

B. REMOVING HINDRANCES

1. Removing the Hindrance of Illness
2. Removing the Hindrance of Demons
3. Removing the Hindrances to Samādhi

1. REMOVING THE HINDRANCE OF ILLNESS

Teaching Session 73

All illnesses belong to three categories: wind (San. *prāṇa,* Tib. *rlung*), bile (*mkhris pa*), and phlegm (*bad kan*). By meditating mainly on the samādhi of shamatha, wind-related illnesses are corrected. By applying yourself mainly to the nature of vipashyanā, 121a
phlegm- and bile-related illnesses are corrected.

Further, phlegm-related illnesses (which are [associated with the element of] earth) are eradicated by the forceful wind of vipashyanā, which is the inseparability of wind and awareness. Wind- and bile-related illnesses (which are [characterized by] movement) are crushed by the mountain of shamatha. Illnesses are also generated by either heat or cold. The cool waters of shamatha pacify the fiery nature of heat, and the sunlight of vipashyanā dries up and burns away the watery nature of cold.

Alternatively, when an illness arises, examine and analyze it in detail, in terms of its essence; its arising, abiding, or departing; its shape and color, and so forth. By recognizing that it lacks an inherent nature, conclude that [the illness] is only a [conceptual] superimposition; other than that, it does not exist at all—it is of the nature of emptiness.

However, if that does not alleviate [the illness] due to the force of full-blown habitual tendencies, then think, "There are innumerable sentient beings tormented by such an illness. May all their illnesses and sufferings ripen upon me, and may that serve as a substitute for their suffering. May all beings be free from suffer-
121b ing." If your illness worsens, apply yourself to the practice of "taking and sending"† (*gtong len*) with a joyful feeling.

Illness is also brought [onto the path] as the four kāyas: Its manifold appearance is the nirmāṇakāya; the awareness [associated with it] is the sambhogakāya; its emptiness is the svabhāvakāya; and the equal taste of these three is the dharmakāya. Or [another way to present this] is that the nonarising of illness is the dharmakāya; its nonabiding is the sambhogakāya; its unceasingness is the nirmāṇakāya; and its empty nature is the svabhāvakāya. You should practice bringing [illness onto the path] as the four kāyas.

[SUMMARY]

Illness is remedied in three ways:

1. You [recognize that] an illness does not exist as a real thing through investigating in the manner just [described].

2. The practice of "taking and sending," which is a counteractive meditation,† will overpower an illness.

3. The yoga of looking at its very nature brings illness [onto the path] as the play of the four kāyas and wisdoms.

To summarize this, in the words of the Gyalwa Götsangpa:

> When illness manifests physically,
> It is the [karmic] maturation of previously having beaten others
> Now ripening.
>
> When those who have committed negative actions are sick,
> Do not summon a doctor
> And do not perform rituals for their demons.
> The illness itself must be taken as the path.
>
> My guru, the dharma-master, taught that

> Illness should not be regarded as a problem.
> It purifies obscurations, gives rise to good qualities,
> And enhances the development of realization.
> When an illness appears, feel joyful.
>
> Practice like this:
> Meditate, thinking repeatedly, 122a
> "How sad it is that sentient beings are tormented
> With illnesses just as I am."
>
> Repeatedly make aspiration prayers, saying,
> "May my illness
> Purify the illnesses and sufferings of
> All sentient beings, whose numbers are as vast as the extent of space."
>
> After that, look directly at the illness.
> An illness is not an existent thing
> With a shape, color, and so forth;
> It is spontaneously present as emptiness.
> By recognizing this, [the illness] is liberated in its own place.
>
> But if illness arises once again,
> Supplicate the exalted [guru] with longing:
> "Grant your blessings so [this illness] may arise as the path.
> Grant your blessings so I do not try to prevent it or encourage it.
> Grant your blessing so it may arise as an aid."
> Supplicate strongly [in this way].
>
> Again, look directly at the illness.
> How could this illness, which did not exist previously,
> Become existent later?
> Rest relaxed within its nonexistence.
> The illness itself will manifest as the dharmakāya.

Practice according to these teachings. If they do not clear up [your illness], you should [use] the relative [methods] found in the key instructions, which include medicines, the key instructions for re-

moving hindrances, "the five nails"[a][264] that enable you to restore [your health] through prāṇa [practices], and so forth.

2. Removing the Hindrance of Demons

Teaching Session 74

122b It is said:

> Your own mind is a hindrance.
> Your own mind is called "māra."
> All obstructing spirits arise from thoughts.[265]
> Therefore, cut through thoughts.

What appears as a demon manifests from your own thoughts or from the magical display of mind. Know that it is your own mind. Mind is clarity-emptiness, free from fixation, or it is brought [onto the path] as the four kāyas. By meditating that the demons themselves are the four kāyas, they are removed.

This can be [presented] in one session. To abbreviate, teach Removing the Hindrances of Illness and Demons together.

3. Removing the Hindrances to Samādhi

Teaching Session 75

It is not the case that there are many [different] faults that arise in meditation: all faults in meditation are categorized as either dullness (*bying*) or agitation (*rgod*). To correct these, [using] the essential points for samādhi, conduct, food, prāṇa, the body, and so forth that were presented above,[266] apply the methods that bring about agitation when there is dullness, and apply the methods that bring about dullness when there is agitation. Train in letting your awareness rest in its own place, free from both dullness and agitation.

Dullness and agitation can also be corrected by [practicing]
123a guru yoga. For dullness, visualize the guru Amitābha (who is red) on top of your head. Imagine that all the lineage gurus, buddhas, and bodhisattvas dissolve into him. Supplicate him with forceful

a. This may refer to the five nails of Nāropa† (*Na ro'i gzer lnga*). (KTGR)

longing and devotion. Then visualize immeasurable light rays radiating from the guru and dissolving into yourself. This completely purifies the four causes of dullness: dullness related to time, activities, obscurations, and [karmic] maturation.[a] The guru dissolves into light and melts into yourself. Meditate that your body is a sphere of light illuminating all the pure realms. That light then diffuses into space. Rest vividly (*ye re*) within a state of heightened awareness. This will remove [dullness].

For agitation, visualize the guru Vajrasattva (who is blue) in the center of a four-petalled lotus at your heart. Visualize on each of the four petals Vairochana and the other [victorious ones of the five families], who are all the same color [as Vajrasattva] and are surrounded by the ḍākas, ḍākinīs, buddhas, and bodhisattvas of their respective families. Visualize blue light rays radiating from their heart centers to the guru and then extending in all directions
like tent ropes. Rest evenly within mahāmudrā. 123b

In general, since both dullness and agitation depend on the essential points for the body and mind, it is important to hold the essential points for the body properly. Alternatively, whichever arises—dullness or agitation—look at its essence and rest without contrivance [within that]. This will clear it away.

If [your experience of] physical bliss is weak,[267] meditate upon the guru Amitābha. If clarity is weak, meditate upon Akṣhobhya. If nonconceptuality is weak, meditate upon Vairochana. By supplicating them for whatever you desire, all hindrances will be removed and excellent qualities will increase.

At the time of death, death itself can be an aid for the path. If you are free from all attachments, if you do not cling to your hopes and fears, and if you can mix [whatever you experience] with clarity-emptiness, death will be an aid for the path.

a. Dullness related to time (*dus kyi bying ba*) is the drowsiness that comes at night or during a hot summer day. Dullness related to activities (*spyod lam gyis bying ba*) is produced by being physically inactive. Dullness related to obscurations (*grib kyis bying ba*) is the result of impairing samaya, for example. Dullness related to [karmic] maturation (*smin gyis bying ba*) is caused by impure karma accumulated in previous lives. (KTGR)

In an extensive [presentation], Removing the Hindrances of Illness, of Demons, and to Samādhi are taught individually as separate topics. Thus this is teaching session 75. To abbreviate, combine all [the sections of] Removing Hindrances into one session.

THE WAY TO PROGRESS ON THE PATH

C. THE WAY TO PROGRESS ON THE PATH

[This has four parts:

1. The Yoga of One-Pointedness
2. The Yoga of Freedom from Elaborations
3. The Yoga of One Taste
4. The Yoga of Nonmeditation]

Teaching Session 76

Generally, mahāmudrā does not depend on the effort of progressing gradually on the path. As Shang Rinpoche said:

> Mahāmudrā itself is a single stride.
> Fools who delineate stages and paths are deluded.

Nevertheless, it is not a contradiction to present the way to 124f
progress on the path in order to guide disciples temporarily; or, as
is the case here, to present [the path] according to the understanding of the gradual type of individual, according to the mental capacity: instantaneous, bypassing, or gradual. [Considered] from this point of view, a detailed description of the way to progress on the path through the four yogas, a delineation of the higher and lower stages, and [an account of] the way the path manifests would correlate each of the four yogas to ground, path, and result; however, here my presentation will simply be in terms of the path

[alone]. It is said in the teachings of the previous Kagyüpas:

> There is the danger that one might mistake experiences for realizations.

[DISTINGUISHING EXPERIENCES AND REALIZATION]

The Experiences of One-Pointedness

The essence [of the experience of one-pointedness] is vibrant awareness (*shes pa sing nge ba*). If that fluctuates between highs and lows, it is still an experience and is not stable. If the highs and lows decrease, there has been some improvement. In general, one-pointedness by itself is experience, not realization.

Freedom from Elaborations

When there is some internal recognition of the unborn [mind] and, thinking, "Ah, this is what the guru taught," one recognizes one's mind, that is experience. When the mind itself clearly realiz-
124b es that it lacks an inherent nature, that is realization.

One Taste

When one thinks, "My body, external appearances, and my mind truly lack an inherent nature," that is experience. When one realizes clearly that external appearances, like images reflected in a mirror, appear separately and yet are the same, that is realization.

[Nonmeditation]

When one thinks, "There is definitely no object of meditation or a meditator," that is experience. When the mind itself realizes clearly that it is free from an object of meditation and a meditator, that is realization.

Thus it is taught that it is important not to mistake experiences for realization.

1. THE YOGA OF ONE-POINTEDNESS

The yoga of one-pointedness is when a yogin or yoginī, who clearly sees the essence of mind, rests one-pointedly and an experience of clear, vibrant, crisp awareness (*rig pa gsal sing nge ba ye re ba*) arises.

From this the three types of experiences (bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality) develop.

[One-pointedness] has three levels—lesser, intermediate, and greater—depending on whether one is not accustomed, is accustomed, or is very accustomed to it. They are referred to in this way because one is able to rest for a short time, a longer time, or for as long as one wishes.

LESSER ONE-POINTEDNESS

When the mind rests without any alteration, gross thoughts cease; bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality develop; and the mind settles
one-pointedly. Because samādhi has not been mastered, this some- 125a
times does not happen, even when one meditates; sometimes it does occur, even though one does not meditate. At times there is clarity; at other times there is not. At this point, one has not attained realization, and strong certainty has not arisen. And yet this can be inspiring, [even though] it is just the beginning of wisdom and only the starting point of the path.

These experiences of one-pointedness are like seeing the sliver of the moon on the first day [of the lunar month]. By letting the mind be without contrivance, one rests in vibrant bliss (*bde sing nge ba*). One may wish that this would never end, but if that [fixation] is not destroyed, meditation consistent with its aim will not develop; therefore, [all fixations must be] destroyed. One must recognize and determine that thoughts lack an inherent nature, without blocking them.

During lesser one-pointedness, one develops the conviction that the mind is clarity-emptiness with an experience of bliss. When thoughts arise within this state, they become self-clarified (*rang dangs*), but there is [still] a conceptually created certainty in the form of the thought, "This is meditation."

Since a "mindfulness that solidifies" (*a 'thas kyi dran pa*) arises with the appearances of postmeditation† (*rjes snang*), one will also solidify most enjoyable appearances. When mindfulness is accompanied by meditation experiences, one's perception may be such that one thinks, "These are empty and are appearances of mind."
Dreams will be a little clearer and more lucid than before, but oth- 125b
er than that, nothing very distinctive will arise. Sometimes it will

be difficult to rest evenly and one may think, "It seems like meditation will never develop." One will [experience] strong fluctuations, but one's devotion, pure perception (*dag snang*), and compassion will increase.

INTERMEDIATE ONE-POINTEDNESS

Teaching Session 77

Sometimes samādhi arises even without meditating, and when one meditates, it becomes stable. The aspect of lucidity (*dangs cha*) that is [developed] through training in the samādhis of bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality enables one to display the defiled supercognitions, magical powers, and many [other] excellent qualities. While [immersed] in those experiences, thoughts arise less often than before and whatever arises becomes self-clarified.

In terms of the appearances of postmeditation, when one is mindful of spacious (*gu yangs pa*) appearances that are combined with the experiences of clarity-emptiness, they arise as meditation, but from time to time they arise solidified. Dreams are less frequent than before. Sometimes these experiences arise and sometimes they do not. One feels very enthusiastic about meditation.

GREATER ONE-POINTEDNESS

Teaching Session 78

Meditative equipoise, postmeditation, and the four daily activities are pervaded by clarity-emptiness without interruption throughout the day and night. The experiences of clarity-emptiness, along with that of bliss, arise continuously; and all thoughts, appearances
126f during postmeditation, and dreams occur within that state.

The main experience is one of emptiness: mind-itself [is experienced] as bliss-emptiness, awareness-emptiness, appearance-emptiness, and clarity-emptiness; and one has numerous experiences of everything being dreamlike and illusory.

Many defiled excellent qualities develop. One may think, "There is no meditation that is more excellent than this. Isn't this greater nonmeditation?" However, if one does not fixate on such experiences and realizations, thoughts will be realized to be clarity-emptiness and appearances to be appearance-emptiness. One will

discover the mindfulness that is certain that everything is mind and that mind is nonarising and self-liberated. Gross thoughts cease. One perceives one's guru as a buddha. One remains within clarity-emptiness throughout the day and night and feels revulsion for saṃsāra. When, through seeing the essence of nonconceptuality, there is nothing to meditate on, one attains mastery (*rtsal rdzogs*) of one-pointedness, gives rise to its excellent qualities, and sees its essence. One must practice diligently until that develops.

Since the five sense pleasures† are the factors to be abandoned on this level, one should abandon attachment to this life, attachment to pleasures, attachment to samādhi, and so forth. One should also remain in isolation and [observe] cleanliness.

On this level the difference between meditative equipoise and
postmeditation is distinguished by whether one is resting or not: 126b
resting in bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality is meditative equipoise; not resting in those is postmeditation.

2. THE YOGA OF FREEDOM FROM ELABORATIONS

Teaching Session 79

One-pointedness is to be comfortable with resting. Through sustaining that experience of one-pointedness without fixation, after some time, without relying upon the effort of being mindful (*dran 'dzin gyi rtsol ba*), one will realize that the resting and movement [of mind], the essence of mind—connate wisdom—and thoughts all are of a nature that is free from arising, abiding, or ceasing.

One understands without contrivance that all phenomena are free from elaborations. All experiences become empty, without [leaving] a trace. The essence of awareness is nakedly and vividly realized to be free from elaborations, like [a seed] removed from its husk or a treasure found [in its hiding place].

And so one may think one's mind has attained freedom (*rang dbang*); that this [realization] is it; and that it could have been realized from the first. One's experiences do not fluctuate greatly, but even if they do one does not feel happy or sad about it.

If one directs one's attention to external appearances, they manifest as illusionlike; even if they do not become empty, there is no contradiction: they appear but are not ascertained† (*snang la ma nges pa*). Certainty about this arises without any superimpositions

127f and there is the realization, "This is the way it is." Shamatha and vipashyanā are unified. Since conceptualized characteristics are liberated in their own place, thoughts arise as the dharmakāya. Appearances are also realized to be one's own mind, and mind-itself is recognized to be the dharmakāya.

Since the view of emptiness predominates [at this level], the basic nature of appearances is taken to be empty, nonexistent, and not truly existent, and one is comfortable with emptiness. One mainly realizes emptiness and [the relationship of] causes and results. This is called "the yoga of freedom from elaborations."

This has three levels: lesser, intermediate, and greater.

LESSER FREEDOM FROM ELABORATIONS

Although one has realized that the essence of appearances, mind, and awareness is simply free from arising and ceasing, one remains entangled in an apprehension process that is certain (*nges shes kyi 'dzin pa*) about [one] facet of emptiness. Because one is not free from that, experiences and realizations are not fully differentiated.

In terms of the mental state during postmeditation† (*rjes shes*), when one is not mindful, one's apprehension [of others] as either friends or enemies is unceasing. Since this apprehension of an object is not cut through immediately, attachment is the apprehension of the six sense objects as pleasing; aversion is the apprehension of them as unpleasant; and stupidity is to be in a state of mental darkness. There arises either an apprehension of virtue or of nonvirtue, because not being involved with the practice of mahāmudrā is nonvirtuous and being involved is virtuous. On this level, it is said that what is neutral does not really occur for those who see the truth.

127b Sleep and dreams are more confused [on this level than on the levels above it]; and one's dharma practice [still] has some highs and lows.

INTERMEDIATE FREEDOM FROM ELABORATIONS

Teaching Session 80

The previous coarse experience of mind being free from arising, abiding, and ceasing, and the coarse stain of apprehending emptiness (*stong 'dzin*) are purified. One is free from the feelings of or fixations on pleasure, and ordinary mind clearly manifests without being an object. It is simply sufficient to recognize that any apprehensions of appearance or emptiness—as well as of the mental afflictions and thoughts—are in their very nature without a basis and free from a root.

Since one still has not developed stability with regard to external objects, one is slightly uncomfortable with appearances. One may have some small misgivings, which might involve thinking, "Where do appearances originate? If it is from emptiness,[268] then when these appearances cease, why is there not a total separation?"[a]

The mental states during postmeditation and the dream state will be varied, both deluded and undeluded. That [lack of delusion] is called "the recognition of the mind during postmeditation." During meditative equipoise one rests effortlessly in a state of recognition.

GREATER FREEDOM FROM ELABORATIONS

Teaching Session 81

Superimpositions concerning external and internal phenomena are severed. Appearances are recognized to be mind; mental appearances are easily realized to lack any inherent nature, to be free from being an object of reference, and to be like the center of space.

128f Previously one was uncomfortable with appearances and comfortable with awareness, and took [resting] within awareness as one's practice. Now, appearances are recognized to be mind and mind is recognized to be empty, so appearances provide the occasion for emptiness. Emptiness is taken as the main emphasis of meditation. By cutting though superimpositions in relation to emptiness, one [recognizes that] all phenomena lack an inherent nature or are not truly existent. Now, one is [only] slightly uncomfortable with the unimpaired freshness, or basic state, of

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a. Why is there not a total separation (*gtan bral du ma song*)? One wonders why appearances would ever manifest again once they have ceased. (DPR)

present appearances,[a] and one feels that appearances are delusive appearances without any basis.

On this level, meditation is uninterrupted during the day, but apprehension does occur at night during dreams. This manifests as traces of delusions and thoughts[269] in the postmeditative mental state. Their arising causes the impairment of mindfulness and resolve during sleep.[270]

When one is agitated by disturbing objects or situations, one's postmeditative mental state becomes somewhat deluded.[271] Up to this point, if one does not "disown" one's meditation, one will never be separated from it. But, since continuous mindfulness has not arisen, one needs to rely slightly upon mindfulness towards objects (*bzung dran*). Consequently, mindfulness is very important.

During freedom from elaborations, mindfulness makes the difference between meditative equipoise and postmeditation. The only distinction between freedom from elaborations and saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is mindfulness.[b] The main instruction is to be mindful.

If one is not involved with the apprehension of whatever appears, even strong feelings of anger are self-empty. If there is no
128b recognition and one does become involved in the apprehension process (*'dzin pa*), mental afflictions and thoughts may seem to be nonexistent, but one is [actually in a state of] ignorance. When one is not separated from recognition, even though mental afflictions arise without interruption, there is nothing to be blocked or produced. As a sign of that [recognition], there will be no idea of

a. Unimpaired freshness or basic state (*so ma nyams pa*): This can be read either as *so-[ma] ma-nyams-pa*, "the unimpaired freshness" or *so ma-nyams pa*, "the unimpaired basic state." "The unimpaired freshness of present appearances" means that appearances are not altered or fabricated in any way. They are empty, and yet they manifest unceasingly. (KTGR) "The unimpaired basic state of present appearances" means that the basic state (*so*) of emptiness is complete within present appearances. (DPR)

b. When there is mindfulness, one realizes that saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are free from conceptual elaborations. When there is no mindfulness, one has the idea of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. (KTGR) Here saṃsāra and nirvāṇa mean postmeditation when there is the duality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. (DPR)

seeking emptiness somewhere other than within whatever arises.

Having purified thoughts, the manifestations (*char sgo*) of the mind during postmeditation are not always a constant state of vibrant lucidity (*dangs sing nge ba*). Therefore, one [still needs] to rely upon mindfulness towards objects. However, while [doing this], it is difficult to be mindful of each thought: one must practice continuous mindfulness. When one is not disturbed by any situation during the day, this is known as "the realization of the greater level of freedom from elaborations." The realization that the essence of mind is free from arising or ceasing is seen in a way that transcends the conceptual mind.

[On this level] one mentally abandons what is worldly, one is not jealous of others, and many excellent qualities will arise, such as the supercognitions. The appearances of postmeditation manifest as illusions. One realizes the nature of bodhichitta, is free from hope and fear, and cuts the root of the apprehension process. One abandons the eighty-two factors to be relinquished on [the path of] seeing and does not return to saṃsāra. One does not take birth in [cyclic] existence through the force of karma, only through the power of one's aspiration prayers. This is called "seeing the essence of freedom from elaborations, attaining mastery of it, and giving rise to its excellent qualities."

One-pointedness and freedom from elaborations are distinguished by whether or not thoughts are realized to be the dharmakāya. On this level, one should give up the three attachments,† 129a
stay in a retreat that is isolated and sealed,[a] and keep silence.

3. THE YOGA OF ONE TASTE

Teaching Session 82

Previously, during freedom from elaboration, one was comfortable with emptiness—that all phenomena lack an inherent nature. The slight discomfort one had with appearances or the "fresh" thoughts that arose is purified [on this level]; thus, what is called "the blending of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa" occurs.

This means there is no reification of apprehending unceasing,

a. "Sealed" (*'dag sbyar*) refers to the custom of meditating in caves whose entrances have been sealed with mud. (KTGR)

fresh appearances to be appearances and no fixation on emptiness in which one takes [appearances] to be empty. External appearances are meditated upon as lacking an inherent nature; dualistic phenomena do not exist at all. In a way that is not merely an intellectual assessment, one realizes that appearing and not appearing, empty and not empty, focusing on appearances or emptiness,[272] the generation and completion stages, the relative and the ultimate, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, and so forth—in brief, all dualistic phenomena, in all their multiplicity (such as happiness and suffering) are not different entities; they are inseparable, unified, and of one taste. They arise as connate wisdom.

The fresh appearances and fresh thoughts that may arise are neither blocked nor encouraged. With perfect mindfulness—which is reflexively aware, reflexively clear, and effortless—one re-
129b alizes that mind, mindfulness, and appearances are interdependent causes and results, like fire and its heat. One is comfortable with appearances. This is called "the yoga of one taste."

[One taste] has three levels: lesser, intermediate, and greater.

LESSER ONE TASTE

Appearances and emptiness are blended inseparably, and everything is realized as being of the nature of the intrinsic state. Fresh awareness (*shes pa so ma*) of whatever arises—regardless of whether it is empty or not—is sufficient. This is realized to be the [ultimate] dharma. Even though one realizes that all the qualities of the path, in their entirety, are complete in either appearances or emptiness, one also has the firm certainty that the body, appearances, and mind (which are inseparable) are mind. On this level, there is [still] a slight sense of something experienced and an apprehending certainty (*'dzin pa'i nges shes*).

The mental experience during postmeditation is such that [the elements are apprehended in terms of their particular characteristics:] earth appears as hard and solid, and so forth. When the six senses are agitated by disturbing objects or situations, dharma practice is not easy. To some degree appearances involve an apprehended object and an apprehending subject, and there may seem to be a slight duplicity in one's practice of the dharma.

The appearances of postmeditation are referred to as "illusionlike." During dreams there is [still] some delusion and the apprehension process [continues]. Sometimes body, appearances, and mind are experienced as inseparable. Since one's observance of cause and effect and one's devotion and compassion may possibly seem to degenerate, one should not let this happen.

INTERMEDIATE ONE TASTE

Teaching Session 83

What was experienced at the previous level and the apprehension 130f
process involving certainty blend into one and are purified. Matter (*bem po*) is not set apart as something external and awareness is not set apart as just something internal: appearances and mind are unified, fused (*krong nge ba*) as one, thus the root of apprehended objects and an apprehending subject is eradicated.

Apprehension arises on the basis of objects. On this level, all apprehended objects arise as the reflexive clarity of the intrinsic state. Since they do not exist, there is no apprehending consciousness. All [phenomena] act as an aid for awareness itself, which is an apprehender arising in relationship to objects. Since all objects (forms and so forth) arise within nonconceptuality, apprehended objects and an apprehending subject arise in relationship to objects.

Although there is no difference in the essence of the union [realized on this level] and that of lesser one taste, this experience has stabilized. The experience of body, appearance, and mind as being blended together as one arises.

The mental state during postmeditation and dreams is less deluded than before and the process of apprehension that involves solidification (*a 'thas kyi 'dzin pa*) does not arise very much. Nevertheless, during dreams and at other times, there are brief moments of what is called "illusionlike dualistic appearances," in which perfect mindfulness apprehends whether one is distracted or not.

Mindfulness towards objects (*gzung dran*) and perfect mindfulness (*yang dag gi dran pa*) differ. When one has become distracted and thinks, "I am distracted," and immediately following that med-
itation arises within one's mind-stream, that is mindfulness towards 130b
objects, and indicates that one is [still] involved in one's previous apprehension process. When, without that conceptual apprehen-

sion, mindfulness alone brings one immediately into practice, that is known as "the dharma of realization, perfect mindfulness." It is a sign that one is not involved in one's previous certainty and, beyond that, that one is not engaged in the process of apprehension.

GREATER ONE TASTE

Teaching Session 84

All phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are realized to be nonarising in the state of equality. Appearances and mind are blended as one and one's previous experience of that is stabilized. Having purified the apprehension of unceasing appearances as real, the realization of nonduality continues throughout the day and night. The manifestations of nonconceptuality (*mi rtog pa'i 'char sgo*) are simply clarity, arising as brief experiences that appear but are not ascertained. Clear appearances (*gsal snang*), which are free from being apprehended, are unceasing. Sometimes, because all that appears (such as saṃsāra and nirvāṇa) arises as the nature of that realization, dualistic thoughts are interrupted.

Postmeditative appearances, which are not conceptually identified, are simply like an illusion. They are like what appears to a magician: even though [a magician] knows that [the magical displays] are nonexistent, the subtle dualistic appearances do not cease. One's dreams, which are free from the apprehension process, appear indistinctly, and at other times no dreams occur.

131f On this level, dualistic appearances are subtle manifestations that, having been purified through practice, arise as brief moments of radiance (*mdangs*), clear appearances, or empty appearances. This is called "the post[meditation] of one taste manifesting as emptiness." In fact, since these are residual factors to be abandoned (*spang bya'i lhag ro*),[273] as long as there is the sense of an experience of meditation, other things dependent on that will naturally arise. Although they are impure, subtle, dualistic appearances, some of the manifestations of nonconceptuality appear but are not ascertained, or they arise as the variety of the reflexive expressive power. The manifestations themselves (which are mindfulness distinguishing distraction or nondistraction) are uncomfortable and are short instances of experience that are simply clarity. These are the residual factors to be abandoned. While

they are present, subtle things that are dependent on them, but which are other, will naturally arise. These are called the "subtle illusions of greater one taste."

Appearances are neither rejected nor adopted, stopped or produced. They are recognized to be the intrinsic state of equality: clarity-emptiness, which is not an object. All dualistic phenomena (such as saṃsāra and nirvāṇa) are realized to be of one taste. The eight worldly qualities are equalized and infinite auspicious connections manifest. When one is comfortable with appearances, this is called "seeing the essence of one taste, attaining mastery of it, and giving rise to its excellent qualities."

The difference between freedom from elaborations and one
taste [lies in] whether appearances dawn as meditation or not, 131b
whether one relies upon mindfulness towards objects with regard to emptiness or not, whether appearances are recognized to be mind or appearances arise as meditation, and so forth.

[One taste] is referred to as "effortless," but compared to nonmeditation there is still some effort. Beginning with freedom from elaboration, apprehended objects and apprehending subjects are pacified within the unborn state; on this level, this pacification also occurs during postmeditation. Here, meditative equipoise and postmeditation are distinguished by whether there is the apprehension process or not and by [what occurs during] sleep.

During the three levels of one taste, one should mostly practice in isolation. From time to time [one's practice] will be enhanced by staying in the company of others. Although one may think there is no difference between meditating and not meditating, it is important to meditate with perfect mindfulness.

4. THE YOGA OF NONMEDITATION

Teaching Session 85

Having become accustomed to that [i.e., greater one taste], the mere illusory dualistic appearances that [arise] to the postmeditation mind of greater one taste and [the levels] below it are purified, and there is the dharma of realization: perfect mindfulness, which is simply nondistraction. The slight stain of apprehending emptiness, the subtle effort of perfect mindfulness, and subtle dualistic appearances are all purified. The very place of spontaneous pres-

ence is reached, and the absence of an object of meditation and a meditator is realized.

Whatever one does is blissful. Even if one does not meditate,
132f meditation occurs without interruption: it occurs without being
contingent on resting or not resting in meditative equipoise, being mindful or not being mindful, being distracted or not being distracted. The relative mind (*blo*) is pure within its basic nature.

The luminosity of meditation and the luminosity of death†—the mother and child [luminosities]†—blend as one. Like the sky clear of clouds, or water without waves, the two luminosities fuse and only the dharmakāya manifests. One thinks that there is no adopting or rejecting, no action or actor, no death and no nondeath, and one has the vivid certainty that there is no meditative equipoise or postmeditation.

In terms of what appears to others (*gzhan snang*): They may perceive that one is served by ḍākinīs, or they may see numerous forms of one's body. Individuals with devotion experience one's reflexive appearance (*rang snang*) as a buddha. Whatever one says is the dharma. Whatever one does physically [causes] faith [to arise] in beings. Wherever one stays, blessings arise. When one is alone, one does not become sad or weary. Wherever one goes, happiness and good fortune arise. Sometimes what appears to others [causes] them to think that one's conduct is like a child's or that one takes pleasure in what is worldly. One's bodhichitta is stable. Karma and its result become manifestly clear and one realizes everything to be nonarising. One has no attachments to anything, no thoughts of things being clean or dirty, and no feelings of embarrassment. Ḍā-
132b kas and ḍākinīs make offerings [to one] and assist one in benefiting
beings. One becomes a wish-fulfilling jewel for all sentient beings.

This has three levels: lesser, intermediate, and greater.

LESSER NONMEDITATION

One does not need to be mindful: whatever one does arises as meditation, free from an object of meditation and a meditator. Meditation occurs without being dependent on resting or not resting in meditative equipoise.

The illusionlike appearances of postmeditation that were present on the previous level of greater one taste have become more subtle; they do not need to be embraced by perfect mindfulness—they are self-purified.

What is called "not recognizing the nonconceptuality of the appearances of postmeditation" (*rjes snang mi rtog pa ngo ma shes*) [means] that although all mental afflictions and thoughts were purified during one taste and the levels below it, there still exists a residual ignorance: the all-basis consciousness,† which is neutral and nonconceptual; it has simply not been transformed into wisdom, but it is a powerless factor to be abandoned that will not continue. It is merely not recognizing the essence of nonconceptuality. Because it is ignorance, it is illusionlike with [only] a brief duration, arising in an instant. Since its very essence is nonconceptual, there is no need to apply a remedy.

At times during sleep there is the slight stain of the apprehension process. Because [cyclic] existence does not arise as reflexive clarity, there is the obscuration regarding objects of knowledge.

INTERMEDIATE NONMEDITATION

Teaching Session 86

Having directly taken hold of the very place of spontaneous pres-
ence,† one's experiences are more stable than before, and one real- 133f
izes that saṃsāra and nirvāṇa exist spontaneously from the beginning. Free from the process of apprehension, one arrives at the very place of the intrinsic state and masters the wisdom of meditative equipoise without [any difference occurring during] the day or night. The subtle aspect of not recognizing the nonconceptuality of the appearances of postmeditation, which are naturally impelled by that wisdom or meditative equipoise, is [now] even more subtle than before. It does not last long enough to be experienced as an object; it appears only as long as a finger snap. Like an illusion, it is liberated as reflexive clarity.

Although meditative equipoise contains the stains of negative tendencies (*gnas ngan len*)—which are simply that the nonconceptual essence (*ngo bo mi rtog pa*) does not manifest at all times as reflexive clarity—and subtle self-imprints (*rang rjes*), it is free from defilement. The appearances of postmeditation, which involve the eightfold path of noble beings† as one's practice, are defiled.

GREATER NONMEDITATION

Teaching Session 87

The consciousnesses are transformed into wisdom. The sword of wisdom cuts through the obscuration regarding objects of knowledge, together with the stains of negative tendencies. Mother luminosity (the pure dharmadhātu) and child luminosity (mirrorlike
wisdom) mix, and union beyond training† (*mi slob pa'i zung 'jug*)—
133b unexcelled awakening—manifests. There is neither meditative
equipoise nor postmeditation. One has reached the uncontrived intrinsic state. For one's own benefit, one perfects, without any limitations, the reflexive expressive power of the intrinsic state, the dharmakāya. For the benefit of others, one [manifests] the two form kāyas† until saṃsāra is empty. One has attained the path of completion† (*mthar phyin pa'i lam*).

At the level of nonmeditation there is really nothing that distinguishes meditative equipoise from postmeditation. For the most part, one does not move from meditative equipoise. Since there are no objects of mindfulness or objects of meditative equipoise, experiences are purified. One is free from the effort of being mindful that involves certainty and so forth. Dharmatā is brought to the place of exhaustion. One is free from apprehending appearances as real. After intermediate nonmeditation, one is able to display many kinds of undefiled magical powers. This is called "seeing the essence of nonmeditation, attaining mastery of it, and giving rise to its excellent qualities."

One taste and nonmeditation are distinguished by whether there are illusionlike [appearances] for the mind during postmeditation and whether one needs to rely upon perfect mindfulness or not. From freedom from elaborations and beyond, there is nothing to be increased in terms of the essence.

THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE TWELVE LEVELS OF THE FOUR YOGAS AND THE PATHS

Teaching Session 88

[ONE-POINTEDNESS]

Lesser one-pointedness corresponds to the path of accumulation† (*tshogs lam*). During the intermediate level, when one is mindful of

the experiences of [space]like[274] clarity-emptiness, these [experiences] continue; even when one is not, they can occur from time
to time. Since these are the early signs of the fire of the wisdom of 134a
freedom from elaborations and the path of seeing;† since here a clear appearance of dharmatā arises slightly (whereas prior to this it did not); and since experiences have been purified and realization is about to emerge, [the intermediate level of one-pointedness] corresponds to the levels of heat (*drod*) and peak (*rtse*) on the path of preparation (*sbyor lam*).

On the greater level, experiences are continuous and thoughts dissolve into that state. Spacelike clarity-emptiness arises throughout the day and night. One has thoughts such as, "I have arrived at nonmeditation." Since the clear appearances of dharmatā are stabilized, this corresponds to the levels of forbearance (*bzod pa*) and supreme mundane qualities (*chos mchog*) on the path of preparation. Furthermore, because one has become perfectly habituated to this, it is supreme among the direct realizations that arise on worldly paths. It approaches the arising of the realizations of freedom from elaborations and the path of seeing. Through this, the twelve factors (i.e., the three sets of four) of the path of accumulation† and the four partial concordances with definite differentiation† of the path of preparation are attained.

[FREEDOM FROM ELABORATIONS]

During freedom from elaborations, one lets go of one's previous experiences while continuing to sustain [the practice]. By supplicating the guru with longing and resting in a state of noncontrivance, without fixating on whatever arises, the experiences of one-pointedness are purified and freedom from elaborations dawns. The moment this occurs, the path of seeing (*mthong lam*) is attained.

Since the realization that all phenomena are free from arising,
abiding, and ceasing creates the basis for all excellent qualities and 134b
gives rise to special joy, the first bhūmi is called "Very Joyful" (*rab tu dga' ba*). It is said that the moment lesser freedom from elaborations is achieved, the path of seeing is attained.

Since the realization that all phenomena are free from elaborations removes the stains of those mental afflictions that are abandoned on [the path of] meditation, the second bhūmi, called "Stainless" (*dri ma med pa*), which is on the path of meditation†

(*sgom lam*), is attained.

Because the mind's primordial freedom from arising or ceasing is realized through the light of the guru's blessings, the third bhūmi, called "Illuminating" (*'od byed pa*), is attained.

Because the realization that [everything] is without a root is the source of all the excellent qualities of the buddhas and accomplishes the benefit for beings, the fourth bhūmi, called "Radiant" (*'od 'phro ba*), is attained.

Because the realization of the union of emptiness and compassion overcomes the stains of habitual tendencies, which are difficult to purify, the fifth bhūmi, called "Difficult to Overcome" (*sbyang dka' ba*), is attained.

Because the realization that is the culmination of greater freedom from elaborations makes the nonarising of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa manifest, the sixth bhūmi, called "Manifest" (*mngon du gyur pa*), is attained.

[ONE TASTE]

The development of lesser one taste in the mind-stream (which is when everything—self and others, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa—blends
135f as one taste) and the realization of union takes one past, or farther than, the shrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, who are attached to the facet of emptiness. Because it makes the connection with the eighth bhūmi, one's destination, the seventh bhūmi, [called] "Gone Afar" (*ring du song ba*), is attained.

When the intermediate level arises in the mind-stream, which is when the root of apprehended and apprehender is severed, all dualistic phenomena arise as the reflexive clarity of the intrinsic state. Because one is unmoved by the discrimination of apprehending difference, the eighth bhūmi, called "Immovable" (*mi g.yo ba*), is attained.

When greater one taste develops in the mind-stream, which is when the appearances of postmeditation arise as illusions, familiarization with this realization of union will give rise to the excellent collection of virtues, such as the four individual correct knowledges,† which are the good qualities arising from meditation. This is the attainment of the ninth bhūmi, called "Excellent Intelligence" (*legs pa'i blo gros*).

[NONMEDITATION]

When lesser nonmeditation arises in the mind-stream, which is the realization free from an object of meditation and a meditator, all the superior qualities of the buddhas arise like clouds gathering. This is the attainment of the beginning of the tenth bhūmi, called "Cloud of Dharma" (*chos kyi sprin*).

Intermediate nonmeditation, which is to take hold directly of
the very place of spontaneous presence and completely purify the 135b
obscuration regarding objects of knowledge, is the attainment of what is called "the special path (*khyad par gyi lam*) that is the end of the continuum of the tenth bhūmi."

Greater nonmeditation is the relinquishment of all factors to be abandoned, including the stain of negative tendencies (which is the momentary nonrecognition of the essence of nonconceptuality), the realization of all that is to be realized, and the blending of the mother and child luminosities. When it arises in the mind-stream, [the path of] completion, the eleventh bhūmi,† "Completely Radiant" (*kun tu 'od*), perfect buddhahood, is attained.

Table 1: Wangchuk Dorje's Presentation

	Path of accumulation	**Path of preparation**	**Path of seeing**	**Path of meditation**	**Path of completion**
One-pointedness: *lesser*					
One-pointedness: *intermediate*		heat and peak			
One-pointedness: *greater*		forbearance and supreme mundane qualities			

Table 1: Wangchuk Dorje's Presentation (continued)

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
Freedom from elaborations: *lesser*			first bhūmi		
Freedom from elaborations: *intermediate*				second through fifth bhūmi	
Freedom from elaborations: *greater*				sixth bhūmi	
One taste: *lesser*				seventh bhūmi	
One taste: *intermediate*				eighth bhūmi	
One taste: *greater*				ninth bhūmi	
Nonmeditation: *lesser*				beginning of tenth bhūmi	
Nonmeditation: *intermediate*				end of tenth bhūmi	
Nonmeditation: *greater*					eleventh bhūmi: awakening

AN OVERVIEW

A generalized correspondence between the bhūmis [and the four yogas] is as follows: The three levels of one-pointedness correspond to the paths of accumulation and preparation. The three levels of freedom from elaboration correspond to the path of seeing

(with the seven branches of awakening)† and the first bhūmi, Very Joyful. One taste corresponds to the path of meditation (with the eightfold path of noble beings) and includes nine bhūmis: [two through ten]. Nonmeditation corresponds to the path of completion and the eleventh bhūmi, Completely Radiant.

Table 2: An Overview

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
One-pointedness					
Freedom from elaborations			first bhūmi		
One taste				nine bhūmis: second through tenth	
Nonmeditation					eleventh bhūmi: awakening

However, logicians may question this by saying, "If the attainment of the path of seeing occurs at the same time as the realization of freedom from elaborations, why cannot the twelve sets of one hundred excellent qualities be demonstrated?" [The answer] is that there is no fault here: the excellent qualities arise gradually with the full development of familiarization. In this regard Shang Rinpoche stated:

> The moment the essence is seen,
> Suffering is not abandoned and
> The power of the excellent qualities does not arise— 136f
> But who could deny it by saying, "It is not the path of
> seeing"?[275]

The moment the sun arises,
It is unable to melt ice
And the earth and stones do not become warm—
But who could deny it by saying, "There is no sun"?

The stages of the paths and bhūmis,
With their particular individual signs,
Were taught allegorically by the Buddha,
As a provisional meaning† for the gradual type of disciple.

Fools are attached to what is temporary and partial.
The highs and lows of disciples are inconceivable.
The teachings of the Buddha are inconceivable.

Though something may not accord with one's own dharma,
Do not deny it or abandon it;
Make the aspiration to [be able to] understand it some day.

Götsangpa taught:[276]

> Furthermore, appearances can manifest in contradictory ways; they may not fit into the minds of you philosophers. The twelve sets of one hundred excellent qualities are the reflexive appearances of realized beings. They are simply shared appearances (*mthun snang*) for individuals with that karma; other than that, they do not manifest. Emanations are also like that: the ability to demonstrate them is inconceivable.

Orgyenpa sums this up:

> There is nothing very definitive about the contradiction that develops from freedom from elaborations being the path of seeing and yet not possessing the twelve sets of one hundred excellent qualities and so forth.
>
> 136b Even in the [Vehicle of] Characteristics, the twelve sets of one hundred excellent qualities of the

> path of seeing cannot be demonstrated to both pure and impure disciples. Nevertheless, in the Pāramitā[yāna], through the power of having trained in worldly paths, numerous signs of the excellent qualities are attained when the path of seeing [is reached]. Here [in the Mahāmudrā tradition], through devotion towards the guru and having [received] profound instructions, one progresses rapidly through the paths; due to which, the manifest signs do not appear. And yet, it is not that this is unsuitable as a path, or that the ability to demonstrate these signs to pure disciples is excluded.
>
> The presence or lack of signs and their degree of strength do not constitute a [valid means of] evaluating whether it is or is not the path. If that were so, since the Pāramitā[yāna] has no more than a fraction of the excellent qualities of the bhūmis and paths of the unsurpassable [Secret] Mantra, it would [incorrectly follow] that the Path of Characteristics is not suitable [as a means of attaining] the paths and bhūmis. The contradictions between the paths and bhūmis of the Pāramitā[yāna] and the stages of the path of the four yogas are reconciled through this kind of reasoning.

You should practice in accordance with such teachings, which are infinite. In contrast, logicians and philosophers—who only spend their time on what does not accord with these [teachings], with doubts, hesitations, and analysis, and who do not penetrate the es- 137f
sential points of practice—idly sit among round-headed black-haired ones playing with consequences in debate. These are the reasons [they believe there is a contradiction].

You should also understand the correspondence between [the four yogas and] the ten pāramitās:† during lesser freedom from elaborations, when you attain the bhūmi of Very Joyful, you practice and train in the pāramitā of generosity, and [this connection between the yogas and pāramitās continues up to] intermediate nonmeditation, where you practice and train in the pāramitā of wisdom.

[THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE FOUR YOGAS AND THE PATHS: FURTHER EXPLANATIONS]

Teaching Session 89

[ACCORDING TO GÖTSANGPA'S GREAT STUDENTS]

Although I have not thoroughly understood the depth of the exalted Götsangpa's explanation on the correspondence between the twelve levels of the four yogas and the paths and bhūmis, nevertheless, my guess (which is simply [based on] my assessment from a devotional perspective) is that it may be as follows. The notes (*zin bris*) of some [of Götsangpa's] great students state:

> The practice and good qualities of lesser one-pointedness are considered to be the twelve factors (i.e., the three sets of four) of the path of accumulation.

They continue:

> Once the experiences of intermediate one-pointedness have been stabilized, when one is mindful of the experiences of spacelike clarity-emptiness, they con-
> 137b tinue; sometimes they occur even when one is not. This is called "heat and peak."

They continue further:

> On greater one-pointedness it said that experiences are continuous. All thoughts dissolve within that experience, and clarity-emptiness arises like the center of space throughout the day and night. One has such thoughts as, "I have arrived at the yoga of nonmeditation," and one perceives the guru as the actual buddha. All the worldly excellent qualities (such as the defiled supercognitions) arise. This is called "patience and supreme qualities."

And:

> The first instant that freedom from elaborations arises is the path of seeing. Following that up through intermediate nonmeditation is the path of meditation.

And:

> As for the realization of the first level of freedom from elaborations: since the realization that all phenomena are free from arising, abiding, and ceasing creates the basis for all excellent qualities and gives rise to special joy, the first bhūmi is called "Very Joyful."

And:

> Since the realization that all phenomena are free from elaborations removes the stains of the mental afflictions that are abandoned on [the path of] meditation, the second bhūmi is know as "Stainless."

And:

> Because the mind's primordial freedom from arising
> or ceasing is realized through the blessings of the gu- 138f
> ru, the third bhūmi is called "Illuminating."

And:

> Because the realization that [everything] is without a root is the source of the superior qualities of the buddhas and accomplishes the benefit for beings, the fourth bhūmi is referred to as "Radiant."

And:

> Because it overcomes the stains of habitual tendencies, which are difficult to purify, the fifth bhūmi is called "Difficult to Overcome." Because the realization that is the culmination of greater freedom from elaborations makes the nonarising of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa manifest, the sixth bhūmi is called "Manifest."
>
> The path of meditation is divided into [levels that are] defiled and [levels] that are not defiled. If intermediate freedom from elaborations is correlated to the bhūmis, it is the seventh bhūmi, "Gone Afar."[a]

a. The text says that intermediate freedom from elaborations is the seventh bhūmi, but this may be a mistake in this wood-

And:

> If correlated to the bhūmis, [intermediate one taste][a] is the eighth bhūmi, "Immovable." The dharma lord said, "One taste is the eighth."

And:

> It is said that greater one taste is called "subtle illusions." In terms of this statement, [greater one taste] would be the completion of the ninth [bhūmi] and the immediate attainment of the tenth. Although it is said that the "one taste of the many" (*du ma ro gcig*) is the realization that arises on the tenth bhūmi, in fact,
> 138b it is actually the ninth. It is said that this is nothing other than a case of the name of the tenth being given [to the realization of greater one taste].

And:

> When the first level of nonmeditation is realized, all the superior qualities of the buddhas gather like clouds; therefore, the tenth bhūmi is called "Cloud of Dharma."

Continuing up to:

> On the level of intermediate nonmeditation one directly takes hold of the very place of spontaneous presence and, since it is said that experiences are more stable than before, there is the liberation in which [everything] arises as reflexive clarity. This is called "the special path that is the end of the continuum of the tenth bhūmi."

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a. (continued from previous page) block edition. Previously, following the same presentation, Wangchuk Dorje said that lesser one taste corresponds to the seventh bhūmi. See page 228. (DPR)

a. Although the text does not specify what is correlated to the bhūmis, it is probably intermediate one taste. (DPR)

And finally they conclude:

> On the level of greater nonmeditation the mother and child luminosities mix, there is neither meditative equipoise nor postmeditation, and one reaches the uncontrived intrinsic state, thus attaining the dharmakāya for one's own benefit. One perfects, without any limitations, the reflexive expressive power of the intrinsic state. For the benefit of others, one [manifests] the two form kāyas until saṃsāra is empty. This is the eleventh [bhūmi] called, "Completely Radiant." The dharma lord said, "Nonmeditation is the eleventh [bhūmi], the path of completion." As was said, from among the five paths, [greater nonmeditation] is the path of completion.

Table 3: Götsangpa's Students' Presentation

	Path of accumulation	**Path of preparation**	**Path of seeing**	**Path of meditation**	**Path of completion**
One-pointedness: *lesser*					
One-pointedness: *intermediate*		heat and peak			
One-pointedness: *greater*		forbearance and supreme mundane qualities			
Freedom from elaborations: *lesser*			first bhūmi		

Table 3: Götsangpa's Students' Presentation (continued)

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
Freedom from elaborations: *intermediate*				second through fifth bhūmi	
Freedom from elaborations: *greater*				sixth bhūmi	
One taste: *lesser*				seventh bhūmi	
One taste: *intermediate*				eighth bhūmi	
One taste: *greater*				completion of ninth bhūmi and immediate attainment of tenth bhūmi	
Nonmeditation: *lesser*				tenth bhūmi	
Nonmeditation: *intermediate*				end of the tenth bhūmi	
Nonmeditation: *greater*					eleventh bhūmi: awakening

Although that is the correspondence, it is difficult to establish an
exact correlation with the Pāramitāyāna without any omissions or
139f excesses. Nevertheless, this is not a fault because it [demonstrates]
the difference between the [mahāmudrā system], where, if the aus-

picious connections are present, awakening [can be attained] in this very life, with this very body, and the Pāramitāyāna, where awakening [is attained] after three countless aeons.

[ANOTHER EXPLANATION BY GÖTSANGPA]

Another of the numerous explanations of Götsangpa is as follows: Gathering the accumulations is the path of accumulation and is the bhūmi of beginners. One-pointedness is the path of preparation and engagement through belief. Freedom from elaborations is the path of seeing and the first bhūmi. One taste is the second bhūmi to the seventh, and lesser and intermediate nonmeditation are the three remaining [bhūmis], all of which are the path of meditation. Greater nonmeditation is [the path of] completion, the bhūmi of buddhahood.

Table 4: Another Presentation by Götsangpa

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
	gathering accumulations and bhūmi of beginners				
One-pointedness		engagement through belief			
Freedom from elaborations			first bhūmi		
One taste				second through seventh bhūmi	
Lesser and intermediate nonmeditation				eighth through tenth bhūmi	

Table 4: Another Presentation by Götsangpa (continued)

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
Greater nonmeditation					eleventh bhūmi: buddhahood

[THE YOGAS OF EXPERIENCE AND REALIZATION]

Some divide the twelve levels of the four yogas into those of experience and those of realization, making twenty-four divisions. The twelve yogas of experience correspond to the path of preparation. As for the twelve yogas of realization: The three levels of one-pointedness correspond to the first three bhūmis. The three levels of freedom from elaborations correspond to the fourth, fifth, and sixth [bhūmis]. The three levels of one taste correspond to the seventh, eighth, and ninth [bhūmis]. The three levels of nonmeditation correspond to the tenth through the twelfth [bhūmi].[a]

Table 5: The Yogas of Experience and Realization

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
The twelve yogas of experience					

a. The Vajrayāna presents thirteen bhūmis. The twelfth is

Table 5: The Yogas of Experience and Realization (continued)

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
Realization of one-pointedness			first,	second, and third bhūmis	
Realization of freedom from elaborations				fourth, fifth, and sixth bhūmis	
Realization of one taste				seventh, eighth, and ninth bhūmis	
Realization of nonmeditation				tenth through	twelfth bhūmi

[AN ALTERNATIVE PRESENTATION]

There are others who say that, following the entrance into the path, the three levels of one-pointedness correspond to the path of 139b
accumulation and the bhūmi of beginners. The three levels of freedom from elaborations correspond to the path of preparation and the bhūmi of engagement through belief. The three levels of one taste and lesser and intermediate nonmeditation correspond to the path of seeing and the path of meditation up through the tenth bhūmi. Greater nonmeditation is [the path of] completion and the bhūmi of buddhahood.

a. (continued from previous page) called the "Lotus of Nonattachment" (*ma chags padma*) and the thirteenth, complete buddhahood, is called the "Vajra Holder" (*bcu gsum rdo rje 'dzin pa*). (Thrangu Rinpoche)

Table 6: An Alternative Presentation

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
One-pointedness	from the entrance into the path; bhūmi of beginners				
Freedom from elaborations		bhūmi of engagement through belief			
One taste and lesser and intermediate nonmeditation			first bhūmi	through tenth bhūmi	
Greater nonmeditation					bhūmi of buddhahood

This is a good presentation because, on the level of greater freedom from elaborations, there is nothing but the slightest realization of unified equal taste. Given that lack, the truth (*don*) of dharmatā is not realized just as it is. Therefore, it is slightly uncomfortable to say that freedom from elaborations is the first bhūmi and the path of seeing.

The earlier similar statements had in mind the perfection of freedom from elaborations. In that case, all fixations on experience (such as apprehending emptiness) are purified and the realization of unified equal taste dawns. Therefore, when present-day explanations state that lesser and intermediate freedom from elaborations correspond to the path of seeing, I think it is difficult to correlate those experiences to the bhūmis.

[THE MOST COMMON PRESENTATION]

All of these explanations must be evaluated by those with intelligence[277] and understood according to their own experiences and understanding. However, the most common presentation is that one-pointedness corresponds to [the paths of] accumulation and preparation; freedom from elaborations corresponds to the path of seeing; one taste through intermediate nonmeditation correspond to the path of meditation; and greater nonmeditation cor- 140r
responds to the bhūmi of buddhahood.

Table 7: The Most Common Presentation

	Path of accumulation	Path of preparation	Path of seeing	Path of meditation	Path of completion
One-pointedness					
Freedom from elaborations					
One taste through intermediate nonmeditation					
Greater nonmeditation					bhūmi of buddhahood

Shang Rinpoche said:

> The clear dawning of realization
> Is the path of seeing, the bhūmi of Very Joyful.
> To be accustomed to the realization of equal taste
> Is the path of meditation.
> To be without anything to meditate on is the path of
> completion.

The table by Götsangpa states:[a]

> The correspondence between [the four yogas] and the five paths and ten bhūmis is as follows: One-pointedness corresponds to the path of accumulation (with the twelve factors, i.e., the three sets of four) and the path of preparation (with the four partial [concordances] with definite differentiation). Freedom from elaborations corresponds to the path of seeing (with the seven branches of awakening) and is the attainment of the first bhūmi, Very Joyful. One taste corresponds to the path of meditation (with the eightfold path of noble beings) and is the attainment of nine bhūmis: [two through ten]. Nonmeditation is the mastery of the path of completion and the eleventh bhūmi, Completely Radiant.

The siddha Ling Repa explained:

> At first, one-pointedness corresponds to the path of preparation.
> When some confidence has arisen, it corresponds to heat.
> When that increases, it corresponds to peak.
> When there is no fear about the lack of a [truly existent] mind, it corresponds to patience.
> [Finally,] one-pointedness corresponds to supreme mundane qualities.
>
> Freedom from elaborations corresponds to the path of seeing.
> The "one taste of the many" is the arising of the realization of the tenth bhūmi.
> Nonmeditation corresponds to the eleventh, the path of completion.

Tsangpa Gyare taught:

> Even though [a presentation of] the bhūmis and so forth is not necessary on the path [of mahāmudrā],
> Nevertheless, if one is to be given, I consider it to be as follows: 140b
>
> The offering of maṇḍalas corresponds to the path of accumulation.
> The arising of experiences corresponds to the path of preparation.
> The arising of realization corresponds to the path of meditation.
> One taste corresponds to the eighth bhūmi.
> Nonmeditation corresponds to the eleventh, the path of completion.

a. The table is included as Appendix III.

There are many such explanations. Further presentations concerning the four yogas—such as their natures; the stages of meditative equipoise, of the mental state of postmeditation, of the appearances of postmeditation, and of postmeditation; the factors to be abandoned; whether mastery has been attained or not; whether the essence [of each] has been seen or not; also, [the methods for] enhancing their development and removing hindrances; the designation of the levels of lesser, intermediate, and greater as distinctive features of the four yogas; the way to abandon the two obscurations; the way to progress through the paths and bhūmis, and so forth—all appear extensively in the authentic sources of the older commentaries and are, therefore, not discussed here. You should consult those [texts] and correctly engage in taking up [what is to be practiced] and rejecting [what is to be abandoned].

[AN EXPERIENTIAL PRESENTATION]

To put this in terms of a yogin's or yoginī's experience: Not to move from the clear yet nonconceptual mind, which is vibrant and crisp (*sing nge ba ye re ba*), or to rest one-pointedly in the stream of unified shamatha and vipashyanā is one-pointedness. When the mind manifests clearly as the unborn innate mind and is, in its own right (*rang ngos nas*), free from the elaborations of the three 141f
spheres, that is freedom from elaborations. When various appearances manifest yet are of one taste with one's own mind-itself, and all dualistic phenomena (such as self and other, saṃsāra and nir-

vāṇa) are of one taste, that is one taste. When, no matter what one observes (something existent or nonexistent), one's own mind-itself does not exist as anything (a meditation object or a meditator) and it expands as luminosity, that is called "the yoga of nonmeditation."

Examine your own mind-stream to determine the current level of your dharma practice, whether it is one-pointedness, [for example]. Look to see what level it is within one-pointedness, such as lesser or intermediate. If it is a lower stage, exert yourself in the methods that elevate it gradually to the higher levels.

The principal methods for improving experiences and realizations are to develop revulsion and renunciation [for saṃsāra], and love and compassion. More specifically, this will occur solely through the force of continually supplicating the guru with the unfeigned certainty that the guru is the buddha. Knowing this, you
141b should exert yourself in supplicating with this attitude. Also, you should include applying yourself to methods that involve visualizations, elaborations, and so forth as the means for elevating [realization] and removing hindrances.

This condenses to its essence the way to progress through the path, develop the twelve levels of the four yogas, and so forth. It has been presented without the elaborations of supporting quotations. You should study the details of this in the teachings of the previous Kagyüpas and other texts, [which present these topics] clearly, and train properly with realized gurus who transmit whatever they have mastered to fortunate students.

> In an extensive [presentation], each of the lesser, intermediate, and greater levels of the four yogas are [taught] in a separate session. Thus this is Teaching Session 89. To abbreviate, combine all [the sections on] the Four Yogas into one session.

The Way the Result Manifests

D. The Way the Result Manifests

Teaching Session 90

With the correct arising in the mind-stream of the twelve levels of the four yogas and the culmination of nonmeditation, complete buddhahood is attained. Because this is the equal taste of space and awareness, the nature of the ground—the union of shamatha and vipashyanā and the supreme attainment—the result, the dharmakāya and the two form kāyas, manifests.

The dharmakāya is the realization of the essence of vipashyanā 142f
or the result of perfecting the nature of nonconceptuality. The form kāyas arise from the actualization of the illusionlike samādhi and so forth, or they arise from the aspect of knowledge that knows the varieties [of phenomena]† (*ji snyed mkhyen pa'i shes rab*). Furthermore, the dharmakāya is free from all conceptual elaborations. The form kāyas benefit sentient beings by taming both those who are impure and those who are pure. These [distinctions] allow for the classifications of the three kāyas, the four, and so forth. Without moving from the dharmakāya, which benefits oneself, the two form kāyas, which benefit others, act for the welfare of beings. They cause vast benefit to spread to everyone and pervade everywhere by means of the four kinds of activity.†

Not only that: One's own benefit is consummately fulfilled through activity that has a performer (*byed pa po*). Through activity that has an object of the action (*bya ba yul*), one acts ceaselessly for the welfare of beings until saṃsāra is emptied, guiding them
gradually on the path according to their individual capacities. In 142b

one lifetime, in one body, and in one sitting, the supreme methods bring the realization of the abiding nature, mahāmudrā, connate wisdom, endowed with the nature of the three kāyas and five wisdoms. By teaching these, the common and supreme siddhis are effortlessly reproduced in the mind-streams of those to be trained. The wisdom of mahāmudrā arises in their minds and complete buddhahood manifests. They will attain the magnificent power of being able to establish all beings on the path that ripens and liberates (*smin grol gyi lam*) through their vast activity.

Since there are detailed presentations of the kāyas and activities in older works, and they are clear in other places, they will not be explained here.

This completes the stages of meditation (*dmigs rim*) for the three sections—the preliminaries, the actual practice, and the concluding topics—of the explanation and practice of mahāmudrā, connate union.

PART IV

THE SUPPLEMENTARY TOPICS

To present the supplementary topics briefly, there are five parts to the explanation of the meaning of "mahāmudrā, connate union":

A. Identifying the Essence [of Mahāmudrā]
B. The Classifications
C. The Explanation of the Term
D. The Difference between Mahāmudrā and Connate Union
E. The Way the Result Manifests from Practice[278]

IDENTIFYING THE ESSENCE

A. IDENTIFYING THE ESSENCE [OF MAHĀMUDRĀ]

Teaching Session 91

In general, there are many names [for the state of mahāmudrā]— 143f
such as mahāmudrā, mahāmadhyamaka, mahāsandhi, and prajñāpāramitā—but [what they refer to] is, in essence, inseparable. The essence of mahāmudrā is beyond description and identification. Nevertheless, just as the moon can be pointed at with a finger, verbal expressions enable the ascertainment of the actual nature (*dngos don*). And, similarly, through relying on relative methods, knowledge (San. *prajñā*, Tib. *shes rab*) is able to realize the ultimate. As is said:

> Without relying on the relative,
> The ultimate will not be realized.

Mahāmudrā is free from arising, abiding, and ceasing; it is inconceivable; and it is the ground, spontaneously present from the beginning. It does not arise from examination; it is beyond being an object for speech or thought; and it is liberated from the four possibilities, such as being existent or nonexistent, empty or not empty. It is beyond all extremes and any hope or fear. It does not change and is neither positive nor negative. It pervades everything and transcends everything. It has never been existent and has never
been nonexistent. It is beyond appearances and emptiness, perma- 143b
nence and nihilism, and confusion and liberation. It is not created by the buddhas and is not adulterated by sentient beings. It is has no dimension and does not fall to any side.

[Mahāmudrā] does not become any color or combine with any

form. Its meditation is to settle into itself. It is the self-purification of faults. It completely contains all excellent qualities and has always been free from extremes. The three kāyas are its natural attributes. The [good qualities of] relinquishment and realization are perfect within it. It is resplendent with twofold knowledge.† It is the abiding nature, present as the basic nature of things as they are. [For mahāmudrā], saṃsāra and nirvāṇa do not oppose each other. It cannot created by the conceptual mind.[279]

No basis of designation for its labels can be found. It appears, yet it is empty; it is empty, yet it appears. Although it can appear as anything, it does not truly exist as anything. It pervades all that can appear—all the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. It is uninterrupted nondual wisdom. It is dharmatā, which resembles space: clarity-emptiness, free from elaborations. Being the inseparability of bliss and emptiness, it is emptiness endowed with the supreme of all aspects. It is the primordial abiding nature, the ultimate expanse of phenomena. This is what is known as "mahāmudrā."

There are numerous quotations that illustrate this in the piṭakas and tantras of the Buddha and the key instructions of the
144f gurus; but I will not include them here for fear of being too wordy.

Nevertheless, if you do not understand this mahāmudrā, you will not be able to practice it; therefore, you may ask, "Cannot its real essence be pointed at?" To condense that into its essence: Your mind—that which thinks all sorts of things, is keenly aware and vividly clear (*rig rig tur tur po*), and is not swayed by anything else—is called "original mind" and "ordinary mind." This alone is it; there is nothing else to search for. As Dakpo Rinpoche said:

> Ordinary mind itself is nondual wisdom, the ultimate uncontrived state, the realization of the buddhas. Other than that, there are no good qualities to meditate on, such as nonconceptuality and so forth.

He continued:

> Or, [to put this in a way that] is easy [to understand]: You do not need to search anywhere else; it is within yourself. What you call "my mind, my mind" is it. To look at the various defining characteristics is not it. Its essence is vibrant and crisp (*sing nge yer re ba*) as mere uncontrived reflexive clarity—this is it.

Shang Rinpoche taught:

> The celebrated term "dharmakāya-mahāmudrā" refers to your own mind. Even if you do not recognize your mind, that which thinks all sorts of things, which is keenly aware—what you call "my mind, my mind"—is it. None of the phenomena comprising saṃsāra and nirvāṇa transcend this. The core of the piṭakas and tantras of the Buddha is this.

Götsangpa explained:

> Then, what is it like? Ordinary mind in the present moment is primordially free from a fixation on things 144b
> and a fixation on emptiness. This points a finger at mahāmudrā. Although it has innumerable manifestations, it is the single, uncontrived, intrinsic mind—there is no other way it is.

Orgyenpa commented:

> The excellence of buddhahood is not to be looked for anywhere other than right within the present mind-itself. The abiding nature of mind is spontaneously present as the dharmakāya from the beginning.

It is said in the *Sampuṭa Tantra*:

> Whatever has the nature of being internal or external
> Is imputed by the mind.
> Other than being mind itself,
> Nothing exists.

Gyalwa Yang Gönpa explained:

> As for what is called "mahāmudrā":[a] Some say that

a. Mahāmudrā was translated into Tibetan as *phyag rgya chen po*, pronounced *chak gya chenpo*. The Sanskrit word *mudrā*, meaning "seal" or "gesture," was translated as *chak gya* (*phyag rgya*). *Chak* (*phyag*) is the honorific word for "hand" and *gya* (*rgya*) means "seal." Both the Sanskrit word *mahā* and the Tibetan word *chenpo* (*chen po*) mean "great."

> *chak* (*phyag*) refers to appearances, *gya* (*rgya*) refers to emptiness, and *chenpo* (*chen po*) refers to unification. That is the terminology of the dharmamudrā, not the terminology of mahāmudrā. All the terminology of clarity-emptiness is the terminology of the samayamudrā. All the terminology of bliss-emptiness is the terminology of karmamudrā.† As for mahāmudrā, the Great Brahman Saraha said:
>
> > It is free from the three conditions, beyond the
> > 145f four joys, and is more special than luminosity.
>
> Mahāmudrā does not depend on the condition of bliss; it does not depend on the condition of clarity; and does not depend on the condition of nonconceptuality. Thus it is free from the three conditions.

He also said:

> Mahāmudrā cannot be shown by a guru. It cannot be understood by a student. It cannot be defiled by experiences. It cannot be adulterated by certainty. It cannot be classified as view, meditation, and conduct. It cannot be divided into ground, path, and result. Therefore, the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa cannot be eliminated or produced, bound or liberated, or altered by a remedy. Recognition occurring in its own place and self-liberation are referred to as "mahāmudrā."

Ritrö Wangchuk said:

> All phenomena are your own mind;
> There is not even an atom's worth of phenomena
> apart from mind.

There are infinite such sayings.

THE CLASSIFICATIONS

B. THE CLASSIFICATIONS

Teaching Session 92

Although no description can completely cover all the modes of classification, in brief there are three:

1. Ground Mahāmudrā
2. Path Mahāmudrā
3. Fruition Mahāmudrā

1. GROUND MAHĀMUDRĀ

[Ground mahāmudrā] is what is realized and manifested by the nondual mind of the buddhas and noble individuals (as explained 145b
above). It is the basic state of the three realms of saṃsāra and the abiding nature of all phenomena from the beginning. It is connate wisdom, which pervades the entire ground. It is present within the mind-stream of all of us sentient beings, from the insects in the stems of grasses up to the buddhas. It is the natural purity (*rang bzhin rnam bdag*), which is neither positive nor negative, large nor small, and so forth.

Saṃsāra and nirvāṇa manifest according to whether the mode of being (*bzhugs tshul*) of the abiding nature, the dharmakāya, is realized or not. Even when there is realization, dharmatā (present as the ground and free from elaborations) is the "creator" of all that exists, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Because nothing transcends this, it is [known as] "mudrā" (*phyag rgya*, seal). Since there is nothing to be sought that is higher than this—no superior "dharmakāya"—it is

fit to be referred to as "mahā" (*chen po*, great).

[Ground mahāmudrā] is present within the mind-stream of all sentient beings. It is the inseparability of appearances and emptiness, awareness and emptiness, and bliss and emptiness, and is spontaneously present as the nature of the three kāyas and the five wisdoms. It is free from arising, abiding, and ceasing, and from the extremes of the elaborations of existence and nonexistence.

146a Nevertheless, through the force of our own connate ignorance† (*lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa*), we do not recognize this, as when we are shown an object in a dark room. This abiding nature transcends verbal or mental descriptions and cannot be conceptually identified, just as a drawing cannot be created in fire or space. It is not known, just as the eyes cannot see themselves, because it is beyond involving an object aspect and subject aspect, or an object of awareness and one who is aware. It is not recognized because there is no guru who can show it; it is like a prince wandering [incognito] among the masses. It is not known because it is the single expanse, like medicinal camphor become poison. It is not recognized because its nature, which abides as awareness, is immediately and incorrectly aware, and imputes mistakenly, as when a rope is mistaken for a snake.

Because acquired ignorance† (*kun brtags pa'i ma rig pa*) does not recognize reflexive awareness, there [develops the idea of] an "I" where there is no "I," a self where there is no self, and conceptual elaborations where there are no elaborations. We are motivated by desire, aversion, and delusion; karma accumulates and matures; and we wander in saṃsāra.

Because [ground mahāmudrā] is too close (*nye drags pa*), it is not recognized. Due to this mistake, we lack conviction about it even though it is present within ourselves and always accompanies
146b us. It is just like our own face, and yet we wander in saṃsāra through ignorance.

Because it is too easy (*sla drags pa*), it is not trusted. The small-minded think, "[Since] buddhahood is adorned with the major and minor marks or is endowed with the dharmakāya, it cannot be the same as ordinary mind. That does not make sense." Since they do not trust in this, they do not recognize it.

Because it is too profound (*zab drags pa*), it is not recognized. Beings are distracted by the net of thoughts and lack unwavering

mindfulness; consequently, due to the fault of not identifying it, they do not recognize it.

Because it is too excellent (*bzang drags*), it is not recognized. Mind relaxed in its own state—mind that does not identify that state, reflexive awareness that is vivid (*sa le ba*) yet is not an object—is the dharmakāya. But since this dharmakāya seems incomprehensible, it is not recognized.

These types of ignorance must be abandoned. The methods for doing so are to exert yourself following the instructions of a guru, path mahāmudrā, and the stages of practice, which will remove [this ignorance].

2. PATH MAHĀMUDRĀ

Teaching Session 93

This ground has been the dharmakāya from the beginning. The methods for manifesting it are the progressive key instructions presented above and the experiences and direct realizations, which [occur] in the context of practicing them. By practicing according to the key instructions of a guru, most adventitious stains are puri- 147a
fied. You realize and recognize that the mind lacks an inherent nature and become accustomed to that. The methods for bringing about this realization are taught in many [places], such as the tripiṭaka and the four classes of tantras; however, in the precious Kagyü tradition, all of these are said to be included in the profound path of devotion to the guru. As was said by Götsangpa:

> The entire vinaya piṭaka is included within the superior training of ethical conduct, which is included within devotion. When the guru is supplicated with devotion, the mental affliction of aggression does not arise; thus, it is a remedy for aggression. The same applies to all the other mental afflictions.

He continued:

> The entire sūtra piṭaka is included within the superior training of samādhi, which is included within this profound path of devotion. Devotion to the dharmakāya [causes] the guru's mind and your own mind to mix inseparably. The samādhi that realizes that the es-

> sence of your mind is free from arising and ceasing is not shaken by mental afflictions or thoughts; it is the
> 147b vajralike samādhi. This samādhi includes hundreds of samādhis, according to the explanation of Gönpo Drikungpa and all [his followers].

And:

> The abhidharma piṭaka is included within the superior training of knowledge, which is included within this profound path of devotion. Through the blessings of the exalted one [i.e., the guru, all levels of beings]—high, low, and in-between—arise as the dharmakāya-guru. Through realizing that the body, appearances, and the mind are of one taste within your own intrinsic state of mind, which is free from elaborations, superimpositions concerning objects of knowledge are cut through immediately within the mind and mastery is attained.

He continued up to this point:

> It is said that the four tantras are also included within devotion. Through offering your body and possessions to the guru, you give your life as service[280] [to the guru]. Even if a thousand iron nails were driven into your body, you would feel joyful, like the exalted Milarepa. This is the practice of kriyā tantra.

And further:

> Continuous supplication [to the guru] and hoisting the flag of [the guru's] renown in the ten directions is charyā tantra. The second [tantra] emphasizes verbal conduct.

And:

> Uninterrupted devoted longing and the meditating and dawning of all thoughts as the guru's mind is yoga
> 148a tantra. The third [tantra] emphasizes the mind and feelings.

And:

> When, through the blessings of the exalted one [i.e., the guru], everything arises as connate wisdom, that is the realization (*dgongs pa*) of anuttara tantra. The fourth [tantra] is solely [concerned with] connateness.

And finally:

> You should know that it is taught that the four empowerments[†] and the two stages[†] are completely contained within devotion alone.

There are further classifications, such as the mahāmudrā of mind-itself (*sems nyid phyag rgya chen po*), the mahāmudrā of all phenomena (*snang srid phyag rgya chen po*), and others. Since the primordial abiding nature is the wisdom of mahāmudrā, free from all extremes, it is present within your own mind-stream. This is called the "mahāmudrā of mind-itself." The pervasive realization or arising of all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa as one great wave of wisdom is called the "mahāmudrā of all phenomena." The way to practice these two is [presented] in the previous sections of instructions and ways to rest [the mind].

[QUOTATIONS: VIEW, MEDITATION, AND CONDUCT]

Teaching Session 94

Furthermore, [path mahāmudrā] can be practiced by means of view, meditation, and conduct. The exalted Milarepa said about view, meditation, conduct, and result:[281]

> Once you are certain about what the view is—look at your own mind. 148b
> To search for the view outside the mind
> Is to be like the wrestler[a] looking for a jewel—is that not so, Doctor-scholar?[b]

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a. See note on page 186.

b. Doctor-scholar (*lha rje ston pa ba*): An epithet Milarepa used for Gampopa.

Once you are certain about what the meditation is, do not correct the faults of dullness or agitation.
To correct the faults of dullness, agitation, scatteredness, and sluggishness in meditation
Is like burning a butter lamp during the day—is that not so, Doctor-scholar?

Once you are certain about what the conduct is, do not alternate between adopting or rejecting.
To alternate in your conduct between adopting and rejecting, hope and fear,
Is to be like a bee caught in a net—is that not so, Doctor-scholar?

Once you are certain about what the result is, have confidence in your own mind.
To search for the nonattainable result somewhere else
Is to be like a frog jumping into the sky—is that not so, Doctor-scholar?

According to the teachings of Dakpo Rinpoche:

Mind is luminous but without fixation, like space.
Not to fall into any bias is the view.

Mind is reflexively aware and reflexively clear, like a mirror.
To be free from fluctuating between clarity and obscuration is the meditation.

Mind is uncontrived and carefree (*lhug pa*), like a small child.
To be free from [trying to] block or produce [anything] is the conduct.

He also said:

To look at your own mind is the view.
To realize that all phenomena are mind is realization.
149a To become steeped in that is meditation.

To experience its essence is experience.

To remain continuously within that is the conduct.
To manifest its essence is the result.
To teach this to others is activity.

On the basis of the view, realization dawns.
On the basis of meditation, experiences emerge.
From the result, activity benefiting others manifests.

Götsangpa explained:

To realize the nonduality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is the view. To be free from the conceptual mind—which takes the various appearances that arise to the six senses to be real—is meditation. To equalize the taste of happiness and suffering, no matter what arises, is the conduct. To be without both meditative equipoise and postmeditation and to have purified the apprehended and apprehender, [so that they are] like space, is the result. To sum up view, meditation, conduct, and result: they are nothing more than this.

The exalted Shang Rinpoche said:

If nothing is seen through looking, that is the view.
If there is no reification of what is seen or recollected, that is meditation.
If bliss and emptiness blend as one, that is experience.
If there is no duality of past and future, that is the conduct.
If the elaborations of hope and fear are severed, that is the result.
These are the guru's key instructions,[282] please fuse them with your mind-stream.

He continued:

The view should be without partiality;
Conduct should be without hypocrisy; 149b
Compassion should be without prejudice;
Meditation should be without distraction;
And then inexhaustible excellent qualities will arise.

He continued:

> If the view is unperverted,
> The level of the recipient of the instruction is not mistaken,
> Meditation is flawless—neither tight nor loose—
> Conduct is free from attachments—unblemished by faults—
> And your samaya does not cause you shame [in the presence of] the deities,
> There is no doubt that the result will be [the fulfillment of] all intentions,
> As illustrated by medicinal trees.

He also proclaimed:

> Since there is no duality of an object of the view and a viewer,
> Being without fixation is the king of views.
>
> Since there is neither an object of meditation nor a meditator on which to fixate,
> Being without fixation is the king of meditation.
>
> Since there is neither an object of conduct nor a performer on which to fixate,
> Being without fixation is the king of conduct.
>
> Since there is neither an object of attainment nor an attainer on which to fixate,
> Being without fixation is the king of results.

The exalted Rangjung Dorje said:

> Viewing reflexive awareness with itself is what is meant by "view." Conduct without an object is what is meant by "conduct." Putting those into action is what is meant by "unification." Resting without distraction is what is meant by "meditation."

He continued:

> In fact, to look at your own mind is the view. Not to

> be distracted from it is meditation. Not to be separated from it is conduct. And to manifest it is the result.
>
> There is nothing to be viewed by looking: appear- 150f
> ances are mind-itself. There is nothing to be meditated on by meditating: awareness is clear in itself. There is nothing to perform through acting: conduct is spontaneous. The result is not something to be produced: your mind is the buddha.

Tilopa sang:[283]

> To transcend the apprehended and the apprehender is the king of views.
> To be without distraction is the king of meditations.
> To be free from effort is the king of conduct.
> To be without hope and fear is the king of results.

Jikten Sumgön taught:

> The view is to see the unmistaken nature of mind-itself. Meditation is never to be distracted from that. To act upon that is the conduct.
>
> All the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are only dependent-arisings: neither arises without the other. All that is dependently arisen is present for [only] a moment. That momentariness is dependently arisen; and that is emptiness. Therefore, the result is the dharmakāya.

The teachings of the previous Kagyüpas were stated clearly by Barawa:

> To look directly is the view.
> Not to be distracted from that is meditation.
> To continuously act [upon that] is the conduct.
>
> The view is liberated from philosophical tenets.
> Meditation is liberated from mental fixations. 150b
> Conduct is liberated from adopting and rejecting.

The exalted Pakmo Drupa:

> In general, individuals who have the capacity for

meditation must have confidence in the view, like a vulture soaring[284] in space. Their meditation must be uninterrupted, like the provisions of a wise woman.[285] Their conduct must be spontaneous, like an old ox urinating.

When things are difficult or easy, happy or sad, we forget the view. When a serious illness arises, we forget the view. Even when we are dying, we forget the view. When we have leisure and good health, we sit in between the sun and shade[a] on large, soft cushions. Drunk on liquor and fat from eating meat, we stretch our arms in the air, saying, "The moment of death is buddhahood. I am ready to leave this body.[b] Everything is empty." But since this view is just words, it is said that this is not very helpful.

Therefore, we must have confidence in the view. This means when things are difficult or easy or an illness arises, we must have the ability to pacify pain and suffering through remembering the abiding nature [discerned through] the view. Moreover, the presence of the abiding nature [discerned through] the view is not sufficient, we must understand it. We must realize it. It is said that to generate understanding
151f and realization, we must meet a genuine guru and rely upon his or her precious instructions through our supreme devotion. This is described as being similar to when a vulture takes flight: its tail feathers must be directed to the ground. After taking flight, since it is considering where it will land, it does not need to flap its wings or do anything but [just continue] its flight.

Meditation must be uninterrupted. This means that we should not be in a flurry of activity in the

a. Between the sun and shade (*nyi grib mtshams na*): The most comfortable place to sit in Tibet. (ATGN)

b. The Tibetan literally says "It is fine to leave [this] skull" (*thod pa bor chog yin*), meaning it is fine to leave this body behind and die. (DPR)

presence of the guru or in front of others. We may count up many sessions of meditation, but afterwards not really be able to suppress the three poisonous mental afflictions. If our thoughts become stronger and our mind-stream becomes coarse, we are no different from any ordinary person.

Therefore, it is important that even though we do not "meditate," we always observe our own mind. We should not become lost to the power of the mental afflictions of desire or aggression but, instead, should exert ourselves in being unwaveringly mindful of what is virtuous. In the context of the Pāramitā[yāna], what are called "mindfulness" and "attentiveness" (*shes bzhin*) are taught to be the support or cause of the three trainings. If these are always present, meditation is uninterrupted. Just as a wise woman [finds] provisions [even when they seem to be] exhausted, 151b
[meditation] should be "stretched out" (*spring nge ba*) into a continuous experience.

Conduct should be spontaneous. In this regard, the best conduct is devotion to the guru. What is called "conduct" does not really refer simply to being on display. It is important to act for the welfare of beings no matter what we are doing, be it walking, sleeping, standing, or sitting. What is called "spontaneous conduct" could become a negative type of spontaneity, in which case we would simply be an ordinary person.

We should exert ourselves in what is virtuous, such as making offerings to the three jewels. The activities of our body, speech, and mind should be directed towards the dharma as much as possible. We should dedicate all the roots of virtue to the welfare of our mother [sentient beings], whose numbers are as vast as the extent of space. In private, do not perform even a needle's worth [of anything with self-concern].

As for what is known as "diligence": [Performing activities] in front of others, such as cleaning a maṇḍala or doing prostrations, is not really diligence;

> it resembles a pig's tail.[a] Therefore, we should exert ourselves constantly without vacillating between being forceful or weak. We should be like an old ox urinating, who is not forceful at first and does not slacken until he is finished.[286]

There are infinite such sayings.

To summarize this: Viewing the actual abiding nature (*don gyi gnas lugs*) is the view. Resting one-pointedly in the inseparability of
152f shamatha and vipashyanā is meditation. Enhancing the development of dharma practice by means of the four daily activities is the conduct. By realizing the ultimate abiding nature, being free from hope and fear and subject-object [duality], and having attained the level of the four kāyas, you are able to protect those to be trained through the four daily activities. This is the result.

As for the meaning of these: a complete explanation of the view and meditation has been presented extensively within this [text].

[THE FIVE TYPES OF CONDUCT]

There are five types of conduct: (1) always-excellent (*kun tu bzang po*), (2) secret conduct (*gsang spyod*), (3) the [yogic] discipline of awareness (*rig pa brtul zhugs*), (4) conduct in a crowd (*tshogs spyod*), and (5) conduct that is victorious-in-all-directions (*phyogs las rnam rgyal gyi spyod pa*).

1. The first involves not being separated from the experiences of vipashyanā. During the four daily activities, thoughts are pacified effortlessly (*lhan gyis*) within dharmatā without the application of a remedy—they disappear on their own, like snow falling on a hot stone.

2. To enhance this [conduct, one engages in] what is known

a. A pig's tail is short and small (compared to a horse's or a yak's tail) and illustrates that our diligence should not be simply directed towards doing small, individual actions. (KTGR) The example could also be interpreted to mean that diligence is not simply doing lots of small acts, i.e., keeping busy, like a pig's tail that is always moving. (DPR)

as "secret conduct." This involves [practicing] with a consort in charnel grounds, near solitary trees,[a] and in other similar places.

3. The [yogic] discipline of awareness is to wander naked, adorned with the six ornaments, with a consort, in villages.

4. Conduct in a crowd involves going to a large town, a marketplace, a low-caste household and so forth, and singing and dancing there. When you are praised, laughed at, scolded, beaten, or struck, these things will aid your dharma practice 152b
and samādhi, like a fire spreading through a forest.

5. When this has become an aid, there is what is called "conduct that is victorious-in-all-directions." Ignorance is purified. Even if you eat poison, it is transformed into nectar, thus you are victorious over food. Because the defiled prāṇas have ceased, you are victorious over the prāṇas. Since there is no bias in either direction—saṃsāra or nirvāṇa—you are victorious in all directions. Because there is no adopting or rejecting, this is the culmination of conduct.

These are the five types of conduct. During these [five types of conduct], because you do not pass beyond the brilliance of emptiness, dharmatā, which exists from the beginning, they are called "mudrā." Because there is nothing to be sought that is higher than these—no "buddhas' wisdom"—they are called "mahā."

These are the stages of path mahāmudrā.

3. FRUITION MAHĀMUDRĀ

Teaching Session 95

Having progressed through the stages of the path, the impurities of the ground are exhausted and it fully manifests. The impurities of the path are exhausted and it is completed. The result is reached right within the ground.

All phenomena appear unceasingly while being empty of an

a. Solitary trees are believed to be places where powerful god-demons reside; therefore, they are often considered to be frightening places. (KTGR)

essence of their own. No matter how many phenomena appear 153f from this nature of emptiness, they do not exist apart from that [emptiness]; there is no duality. Thus, there is liberation from the cycle of dualistic perception and hope and fear.

The culmination of realization is to realize the nature of mahāmudrā, which is endowed with numerous excellent qualities, such as the powers† and the fearlessnesses.† It is to realize the final nonmeditation, the essential nature of the three kāyas and the five wisdoms, endowed with the excellent qualities and activity. It is free from all obscurations, has realized all that is to be realized, and has manifested all excellent qualities, such as those of separation and maturation. This is known as "fruition mahāmudrā."

In general, because all external and internal phenomena do not pass beyond being appearances, awareness, and emptiness, they are of the nature of the three kāyas. These can be correlated to ground, path, and result.

As for the ground three kāyas: Your own mind does not truly exist as anything; it is free from all conceptual elaborations. This expanse being emptiness is the dharmakāya. This emptiness is not nothingness nor is it like matter (*bem po*). Emptiness, in being reflexive awareness and reflexive clarity and in recognizing the nature of all diverse [appearances], is the sambhogakāya. This emptiness, in being an unceasing brilliance and in manifesting as myriad objects, which are its natural forms† (*rang gzugs*), is the nirmāṇakāya. That the three kāyas are complete within yourself 153b can be illustrated, respectively, by the oil permeating sesame seeds, lapis lazuli, and [the self-radiance of] the uncontrived intrinsic state.[a] According to the teachings of Rangjungpa:

> The empty essence is the dharmakāya. The clear nature is the sambhogakāya. The unceasingness and appearing as anything is the nirmāṇakāya.
>
> This emptiness is the wisdom of the dharmadhātu. This clarity is the mirrorlike wisdom. That these two exist equally is the wisdom of equality. That these two exist distinctly and unmixed is the wisdom of discrimination. That these are spontaneously present without contrivance is the wisdom that accomplishes activities. The above-mentioned emptiness corresponds to [a buddha's] body, clarity to [a buddha's] speech, and their existing equally without duality to [a buddha's] mind.

He continued:

> Teachings that are primarily concerned with ground, path, and result [present] mahāmudrā in those terms. Teachings that are primarily drawn from the mother yoga tantras [present] the mahāmudrā of bliss-emptiness. Teachings that are primarily drawn from the method tantras [present] the mahāmudrā of clarity-emptiness. Teachings that are primarily drawn from the nondual tantras [present] the mahāmudrā of awareness-emptiness.

a. The third example is the uncontrived intrinsic state (*ma cos gnyug ma*). It is unclear how this serves as an example for the nirmāṇakāya, so it may be best understood to mean that the nirmāṇakāya is the self-radiance (*rang mdangs*) of the uncontrived intrinsic state. (KTGR)

[FURTHER CLASSIFICATIONS]

There are two classifications: When the consideration is the naturally present abiding nature, that is the mahāmudrā of the abiding nature (*gnas lugs phyag chen*). When the consideration is to cause that realization through realizing the union of bliss and emptiness, that is the mahāmudrā of bliss-emptiness (*bde stong phyag chen*).

There are also three classifications of connateness: When the 154f consideration is the abiding nature itself, that is natural connateness (*rang bzhin lhan skyes*). The progressive path of the third empowerment—which causes realization through being the example that illustrates that [natural connateness]—is the connateness of melting bliss (*zhu bde lhan skyes*). The path of the fourth empowerment, which is the direct realization of that nature, is the connateness of bliss-emptiness (*bde stong lhan skyes*). Of these, the latter is called "mahāmudrā."

To take this further, silver ore, the silver extracted from that, and something fashioned from the silver (such as a statue) are analogous to ground, path, and fruition mahāmudrā.

Concerning samaya, Shang Rinpoche said:

> There are four samayas of mahāmudrā: The mental afflictions are not to be abandoned, because they are your own mind. Wisdom, the remedy, does not need to be applied to the mind-stream, because [wisdom] and those [mental afflictions] are not dual. Suchness is not meditated on, because it is not a reference point. The result is not hoped for, because it is realized to be your own mind.

Those are the classifications.

THE EXPLANATION OF THE TERM

C. THE EXPLANATION OF THE TERM

Teaching Session 96

It is said in the *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra:*[287]

> *Chak* refers to the wisdom of emptiness.
> *Gya* refers to liberation from the phenomena of saṃsāra.
> *Chenpo* refers to union. 154b
> This describes "mahāmudrā."

It is said in the *Four Syllables:*[288]

> *Chak* refers to the wisdom of emptiness.
> *Gya* refers to being without partiality.
> *Chenpo* refers to being beyond extremes.
> These are renowned as the four syllables.

The *Great Mātaraḥ Meditation*[289] states:

> *Chak* means the inseparability of bliss and emptiness;
> Because nothing passes beyond that, it is referred to as *gya.*

Dakpo Rinpoche taught:

> *Chak* is the realization that all that appears in saṃsāra and nirvāṇa does not pass beyond unborn dharmatā. Since, in general, all appearances do not pass beyond

the intrinsic state, this is called "*gya*." Dharmatā is realized to be self-liberated; therefore, this is called "*chenpo*."

Shang Rinpoche explained:

[In the term] "*chak gya chenpo*," *chak gya* has the meaning of not transcending. This is called "*chenpo*" because it is spacious and vast.

For example, any [document] that has his seal (*chak gya*) is a command of a chakravartin that cannot possibly be transgressed by anyone, be they local rulers of border countries or the like. Similarly, it is not possible for any of the phenomena of saṃsāra or nirvāṇa to go beyond the state of unborn mahāmudrā.
155f Because their nature is unborn mahāmudrā, [mahāmudrā] is spacious and vast; thus, it is called "*chenpo*."

Orgyenpa said:

Because that which creates the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa cannot pass beyond it, it is *chak gya*. Because there is nothing to be sought that is higher than this—no superior "dharmakāya"—it is called "*chenpo*."

The glorious Khachöpa stated:

The meaning of *chak* is the union of space and wisdom. That saṃsāra is liberated in its own place is the meaning of *gya*. The unsurpassable wisdom of union is *chenpo*.

Gyalwa Mikyö Dorje expounded:

Chak gya means that, since all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa do not pass beyond that, they are sealed (*chak gya*). For example, local rulers and ministers do not transgress a command marked by a chakravartin's seal (*chak gya*). *Chenpo* means it is great because it transcends the samaya-, dharma-, and karma-[mudrās] or because there is nothing greater than this.

My glorious guru said:

The meaning of the honorific word *chak* is that it refers to the hand of the victorious ones. *Gya* means
union and not passing beyond that [union]. *Chenpo* 155b
means it is supreme because it transcends the other types of mudrās (*chak gya*), which are temporary, and because, being ultimate, nothing can transcend[290] it.

There are numerous such sayings in the sūtras, tantras, and key instructions.

As for what is known as "connate union" (*lhan cig skyes sbyor*), Khachöpa said:

Whatever arises connately
Is referred to as "connate,"
And is connate in nature;
All manifestations are one in this bond.[291]

That is the meaning of "con-" (*lhan cig*).

Everything arises from the nonarising state.
At the very moment of its arising, it lacks any inherent nature.

That is the meaning of "-nate" (*skyes pa*). "Union" (*sbyor ba*) means union with the natural state (San. *yoga*, Tib. *rnal 'byor*):

Yoga is not [just] method,
Nor is it only knowledge.
The Tathāgata taught that yoga is
The union of method and knowledge.

That is the meaning of "union." This summarizes the essence of the meaning of mahāmudrā, connate union. This presentation alone will liberate those of the highest abilities and best fortune; they do not need to consider the numerous subsidiary topics.

Dakpo Rinpoche said:

In regard to connate union, one may ask, "What arises 156f

> in union?" Awareness and emptiness are connate. They are not separate. Because awareness, clarity, and bliss are unified with emptiness, [they are] connate union.

Barawa Gyaltsen Palzang explained:

> The etymology (*nges tshig*): *Chak* means emptiness. *Gya* means not transcending. Therefore, in this way, all phenomena are uncontrived, unchanging, and unadulterated. Their freshness or basic state is unimpaired; their brilliance is undamaged. The basic nature or abiding nature of whatever appears and whatever manifests is emptiness, which does not exist as anything at all. This is *chak*. It is said in the *Tantra of the Union of All Buddhas*:[292]
>
> > E-MA The secret of all buddhas
> > Is that complete buddhahood does not arise.
> > Everything arises from the nonarising state.
> > At the very moment of arising, there is no arising.
>
> Whatever varieties of dualistic phenomena manifest, whether positive or negative, they do not pass beyond emptiness; thus they are sealed (*gya*). For example, no matter how many birds fly in the sky or fish swim in the distant oceans, they do not pass beyond the sky or water. It is said in the *Glorious Secret Conduct Tantra*:[293]
>
> > All phenomena are of the nature of mind.
> > 156b Mind is of the nature of emptiness.
> > Because everything is one taste within emptiness,
> > It is the space where there is nothing to adopt or reject.
>
> Therefore, since whatever manifests does not pass beyond emptiness, it is primordially liberated from the net[a] of saṃsāric phenomena, which are the factors to

a. This is a play on the Tibetan word *rgya*, which, in addition to "seal," can also mean "net."

> be abandoned. Since the factors to be abandoned lack an inherent nature, there is no net that binds. Since an "I" or a self lacks an inherent nature, there is no self that is bound. Since there is nothing that binds and nothing that is bound, there is liberation from saṃsāric phenomena.
>
> Since whatever appears does not, in itself, have the inherent nature of an appearance, it is empty. The radiant clarity of emptiness appears nakedly (*rjen ne ba*) and unceasingly. Because whatever manifests is, in itself, not created by anyone, there is nothing higher than this fused (*khrig ge ba*) unification; therefore, it is *chenpo*. It resembles reflections in a mirror: although reflected images appear in a mirror, they lack the inherent nature of those [objects] and are, therefore, empty. And yet, even though those [reflected images] have no such inherent nature, the images of those [objects] appear clearly. As is said in the *Mahāmudrā Drop Tantra*:
>
> > Listen, Mahāmudrā goddess:
> > Mahāmudrā is the great secret.
> > It is indescribable, inexhaustible, and unborn.
> > It [manifests in] all forms and is free from form.
> > It is formless and is the supreme self-entity of forms. 157a
> > It is neither coarse nor subtle and so forth.
> > Its nature is unassessable.
>
> As for connate union: It is not asserted that connate means that two [things] come together. It means that a thing that is single in essence can have three qualities [present] in a connate manner. The single essence of gold contains the three [qualities] of being yellow in color, very heavy, and not being spoiled by melting and hammering. The heaviness and unchangeability through melting and cutting are not separate from the color yellow. The other two qualities do not exist apart from the heaviness. This is not a discussion where these three [qualities] are not gold. As long as something is gold, they are connate

[with it]. Therefore, its yellowness is the color yellow, is heavy, and is not spoiled by melting and hammering. Likewise, each of the other two [qualities] contain all three.

Similarly, the essence of awareness, the nature of emptiness, and the characteristic of clarity are connate with ground bodhichitta. However, there is no awareness or clarity that exists apart from its emptiness. There is no emptiness or awareness that exists
157b apart from its clarity. There is no clarity or emptiness
that exists apart from its awareness. These are in essence a single mind, but as three isolate qualities[†] (*ldog chos*) they manifest as three: emptiness, awareness, and clarity.

Although they manifest as three, since they are inseparable, they are connate: emptiness arises as awareness and clarity; awareness arises as emptiness and clarity; clarity arises as emptiness and awareness. Within each one of these—clarity, awareness, and emptiness—all three arise completely. This is called "connateness." It is described in the *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra]*:[294]

> Whatever has arisen connately
> Is referred to as being "connate in nature";
> All manifestations are one in this bond.

When this [connateness] is united with the mindstream, it is known as "connate union." It is present within the buddhas above, down to the insects in the stems of grasses, regardless of their quality or size.

When this self-nature is recognized, it is called "connate wisdom." When this is not recognized, it is called "all-basis consciousness." The recognition of that is called "connate wisdom"; the lack of recogni-
158a tion is called "connate ignorance." One may wonder,
"Which [came] first?" There is no [distinction to be made in terms of one being] previous and [the other being] later in time. There is also no [distinction to be made in terms of one being] positive and [the other

being] negative in essence; both have the same essence.

Gyalwa Yang Gönpa taught:

> As for the meaning of the term mahāmudrā: Mahāmudrā is Sanskrit for the Tibetan *chak gya chenpo*. The term conveys the sense of not being transcendable, not divisible, or not empty.
>
> As for all the phenomena included within saṃsāra and nirvāṇa: Within their own state, their freshness or basic state is unimpaired and they do not change their color. They do not pass beyond wisdom, which is connate in the timelessness beyond the three times. Therefore, this is *chak gya*. Since there is nothing apart from this or higher than it, it is *chenpo*.
>
> To relate this specifically to an instant of consciousness: When a thought suddenly arises, do not do anything to that thought, such as trying to block it or encourage it. That vivid (*ta le ba*) thought itself is the actual ground for connate wisdom. Whether this is realized or not, it does not pass beyond that [ground]; therefore, it is *chak gya*. Because there is nothing—no "wisdom" or "realization of the buddhas"—to be sought somewhere other than within thoughts, it is *chenpo*.

He also said:

> These are explanations of the terms mahāmudrā and
> connate union. Furthermore, no matter what [names] 158b
> are given to it—mahāmudrā, mahāmadhyamaka, mahāsandhi, and so forth—there is no contradiction.

According to Pakmo Drupa:

> Because [mahāmudrā] tames everything—thoughts and mental afflictions—
> It is vinaya.
>
> It is the state of certainty that
> Thoughts are the dharmakāya.

Because this cuts through superimpositions from within,
It is the instructions of the guru.

Being free from extremes, such as permanence and nihilism,
Superimposition and denigration,* it is Madhyamaka.

Because this cannot be expressed through speech or thought,
It is the instructions of the [Prajñā]pāramitā.

Because all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa
Are complete within the mind, it is Mahāsandhi.

[Because] the mind does not engage with either good thoughts or bad thoughts,
It is Mahāmudrā.

Because this pacifies suffering, it is Pacification.†

Because this incorporates all mental afflictions and thoughts
As the path, it is Secret Mantra.

Mind, thoughts, and the dharmakāya
Are connate from the beginning.
Since they are unified as one through the instructions,
They are explained as "connate union."

It is said that this is mantra [because it pacifies]
The obstacles of demons, māras, and so forth.[295]

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAHĀMUDRĀ AND CONNATE UNION

D. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAHĀMUDRĀ AND CONNATE UNION

Teaching Session 97

Dakpo Rinpoche said, in reply to questions asked by Pakmo Drupa: 159f

> [When Pakmo Drupa] asked, "Is there a difference between mahāmudrā and connate union?" [Dakpo Rinpoche replied:] "Mahāmudrā is that all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are primordially spontaneously present; it is dharmatā, which resembles space; it is the single, nondual wisdom, [present] at all times. Connate union is to unify whatever thoughts arise with the four kāyas. Therefore, it is not asserted to [occur] at all times; it is not continuous."

Shang Rinpoche said:

> Such a nature
> Cannot be seen using words or examination.
> The lowest should exert themselves in the path of the lineage.
> The intermediate should exert themselves in the methods of nāḍīs and prāṇas.
> The best should meditate on connate union

And mahāmudrā.

He also said:

The wisdom of connate union
Destroys thoughts and transforms them into the
dharmakāya.
With the key instructions of mahāmudrā,
Thoughts are relaxed and transformed into the
dharmakāya.

There are infinite such sayings.

[THE FOUR POINTS CONCERNING MAHĀMUDRĀ]

In brief, mahāmudrā can be presented through four points that
159b summarize all the infinite topics [on this subject]. These are presented through [the following quotation] from the teachings of Götsangpa:

What is called "mahāmudrā" [is presented through] four points: (1) its essence (*ngo bo*), (2) its etymology (*nges tshig*), (3) its classifications (*dbye ba*), and (4) its distinctive qualities (*khyad pa*).

1. ITS ESSENCE It pervades everything, everything is included within its nature, and it is beyond being an object of thought or verbal description.

2. ITS ETYMOLOGY It is said:

Chak means it is emptiness.
Gya means it is liberated from the phenomena of
saṃsāra.
Chenpo means it is the realization of union.

3. THREE CLASSIFICATIONS Mahāmudrā that is the ground pervading everything; mahāmudrā that is the path to be practiced; and mahāmudrā that is the spontaneously present result. Mahāmudrā has three characteristics: its essence does not truly exist as anything; its manifestation (*rnam pa*) is not impeded by anything; and these are inseparable.

4. FIVE DISTINCTIVE QUALITIES (a) The distinctive quality of the view is that realization dawns from within without relying on scriptures or reasonings. (b) The distinctive quality of meditation is that dullness and agitation are liberated in their own place without relying upon mental concentration. (c) The distinctive quality of the samaya is that the undefiled vows are continuous without relying upon guarding or restraining. (d) The distinctive quality of the conduct is that the knots [produced by] adopting and rejecting are freed in their own place without relying upon remedies. (e) The distinctive quality of the result is that it is present spontaneously, existing as its natural attribute (*rang chas*), without any reference to time or
signs. 160f

THE WAY THE RESULT MANIFESTS FROM PRACTICE

E. THE WAY THE RESULT MANIFESTS FROM PRACTICE

Teaching Session 98

The experiences and realizations of the inseparability of shamatha and vipashyanā arise in the mind-stream in accordance with the way the result manifests [as explained] above. The realizations of one-pointedness, freedom from elaborations, one taste, and non-meditation manifests, and one progresses through the bhūmis and paths instantaneously or gradually. Thus the genuine state of complete buddhahood manifests.

[FURTHER REMARKS]

Here, in order to develop confidence, and thinking of their great blessings, I have quoted the teachings of the previous Kagyüpas literally, despite the abundance of words involved. Because [the words] contain great blessings, it will be valuable for practitioners to retain these words. Even if they do not do so, they will accomplish their aims by clearly bringing to mind the meaning of these [quotations] and meditating in a way that mixes them with their mind-stream as much as possible.

[Mahāmudrā] is the single path traveled by the buddhas of the three times. It is the key instructions that liberate everything through knowing the one, which have been transmitted orally—from one ear to another—without being interrupted by other lin-
160b eages or words. It is the heart-essence (*thugs kyi bcud*) of all realized gurus. It is the practice that all previous Kagyüpas have undertak-

en and it is what has developed in their mind-streams. This establishes all beings within maturation and liberation. It is the pinnacle of all yānas and the heart of all instructions.

Through merely seeing the supreme essence of *The Instructions on* Mahāmudrā, *Connate Union*, understanding, experiences, and realizations will arise in one's mind-stream. *The Radiant Activity of the Essence of the Ocean of Definitive Meaning* is known as the feast for those who desire liberation, the source [fulfilling] all wishes, what bestows supreme liberation.

In [composing] this, I have refrained from personally fabricated interpolations. Instead, I have collected precisely and literally from the stream of teachings of the authentic Kagyü gurus—from the previous gurus, Gampopa, Düsum Khyenpa, and the others, down to my glorious guru, the omniscient Könchok Yenlak. This is offered as a dharma gift with the intention of benefiting [others].

Nevertheless, if personal fabrications and excesses and omissions become apparent, may the gurus and assembly of ḍākinīs forgive me. By whatever roots of virtue there may be [in composing this text], may the wisdom of connate-mahāmudrā arise unhindered in the mind-streams of all sentient beings.

I have heard little and am devoid of experiences; 161f
I am not even convinced that the time of my death is uncertain.
Being swept away by the busyness of fame and the distractions of this life,
All [meditation] experiences simply remain as wishful thinking.

It is, therefore, difficult for me to speak from my own experiences.
Nevertheless, the precious Kagyü have this kind of power,
And so I have presented a fragment of the essence of the definitive meaning
Through the force of my confidence in and respect for [their power].

Nowadays in this land, as the Buddha's teachings
Near their last five hundred years,

Most monastics are distracted with the activities of householders.
Given that they have cast listening, reflection, and meditation behind themselves,
There is no need to mention that they do not employ themselves in virtuous actions day and night.

Subduing their enemies and protecting their relatives, they are pretentious and [full of] empty arrogance.
For the sake of food, they bring down calamities; for the sake of status, they become bhikṣhus.
For the sake of provisions, they act hypocritically and engage in studies.

Clothed in pride and avarice, they praise themselves and denigrate others.
If they were to examine this, [they would see that] their mind-streams are filled with mental afflictions;
Yet they think that siddhas, scholars, and well-disciplined ones are no match for themselves.
There are many of these who, along with their associates, embrace negative actions.

Hiding the teachings of the gurus,
They boast that they have realized them and understand them.
Although they pretend to instruct others and lead them,
161b Are they not just deceiving themselves?

Therefore, in composing this,
I cast away any assumptions that I am a scholar—this is for all my mother sentient beings.
Abandoning any personally fabricated adulterations, I have presented this according to the Kagyü teachings,
Directly, without concealing anything.

Nevertheless, whatever excesses and omissions, mistakes, and confusions may be present,
May the gurus and assembly of ḍākinīs forgive them.
Through whatever virtue there may be, may all sentient beings, who pervade space,
See their own face, the supreme abiding nature.

As for this nectar of eloquent explanations on the essence of the profound topics—
I have clearly presented whatever arose in my mind
To fulfill the hopes of those who wish and strive for liberation.
Through this, may all beings attain the bhūmi of vajra deathlessness.

In those who see, hear, remember, or practice
This *Radiant Activity of the Essence of the Definitive Meaning*,
May experiences and realizations well up like a river in full spate.
May they be liberated without effort and accomplish all their activity.

Through the virtue of presenting
This essence of the profound instructions on the practice of
Mahāmudrā-connate union,
In accordance with the request of the reincarnation, Karma Drakpa Namgyal, and others,
May the radiance of connate wisdom 162f
Spread widely to all [beings], causing the lotus garden of the teachings
To blossom in a hundred directions and all beings, including the gods,
To swiftly attain the level of unified great bliss.

Because I could not refuse the request of a few intelligent ones endowed with faith, such as the reincarnation, Karma Drakpa Namgyal Palzangpo, the tulku of Riwoche Padma Gyalpo, (who is endowed with the numerous excellent qualities of the scriptures and realization, has trained in previous [lives], and [appears] in a garland of rebirths), I, one [who wanders] in the ten directions,

Palden Mipam Chökyi Wangchuk began this at the great seat of Tsurphu. I wrote the draft in conjunction with [giving a course on] the meditation sessions at Drikung Tashi-tsal.

May the teachings of the practice lineage—the blazing glory of auspiciousness—spread. May all beings, who pervade space, be adorned with the enjoyment and glory of happiness and virtue.

This has been teaching session 98. There are 45 meditation sessions.

[CONCLUDING REMARKS]

During post[meditation], there are the appropriate meditations and techniques that can be applied to [each] level of attainment. You should know that the meditation sessions are what is to be practiced and the teaching sessions are what is to be understood.

May the glorious wisdom protector Bernakchen and consort,†
162b with their retinues, be the guardians of these teachings. If those who have no faith, those who have no connection, or those who, on the basis of the words [of the text] alone, claim to have developed [experiences] in their mind-stream and thus deceive themselves and others by lying about their attainments,† [if such as these] see or spread [these teachings], may [the protectors] severely punish them.

For those who practice properly and have faith, may [the protectors] assist them, so that simply by seeing [these teachings], their experiences and realizations will increase and they will attain the siddhi of Vajradhara in this very lifetime, with this very body.

Other commentaries only include the meditation sessions and the supporting teachings; the details of the questioning process and pointing-out instructions [must be learned from the guru's] oral instructions or are written elsewhere. Here, since these sections are all clearly presented together, even if those of lesser intelligence see them, they can simply read them [with comprehension]. Once they have just received the reading transmission from the guru, if they practice with sincerity and develop according to the explanations for practice [given] in this instruction text, it is certain that all their aims will be accomplished and [true] experiences and realizations will arise. However, because of having such clear instructions, some may not develop [any experiences] in their mind-stream, but will claim to have them, while

having only a dry intellectual understanding on the basis of the words of instruction. If they take that to be sufficient, they will be lying about their attainments. Since this is a case of deceiving yourself, it should be avoided.

May the dharma protector Bernakchen be the guardian of
these teachings. If those who are not suitable recipients—such as 163f
those who do not hold their own lineages, who have no samaya, or who hold wrong views—see or spread [these teachings], may [the protector] punish them. For those who delight in these teachings, who are suitable recipients, who have fully developed faith, and who maintain their practice one-pointedly, may [the protector] guard and protect them. May their obstacles to the practice of dharma be pacified and may they be assisted in attaining the supreme and common siddhis in this very lifetime.

[DEDICATION OF THE RUMTEK MONASTERY WOODBLOCKS]

OṂ SVASTI
Because all phenomena are, from the beginning, beyond causes and conditions,
The naturally pure abiding nature
Cannot be conceived of as having the characteristics of delusion or liberation.

And yet, from what merely arises within suchness,
Delusion [occurs] through the perversion of simply engaging in conceptual fixation.
Ignorance is the sphere of experience for the six classes of beings in saṃsāra.

What arises from the natural state is self-liberated.
Without the engagement in conceptual fixation, self-arisen wisdom
Is liberated in its own place; this is called "ground mahāmudrā."
Pointing out the ground is known as mahāmudrā;
The term "first buddha" is given to that.

Ordinary mind is the present mind, transcending a sequence of past and future moments—

Awareness, open and without grasping.
This is unobscured by objects of meditation and unadulterated by delusion.

163b Clarity-emptiness, just as it is—vast,[296] without any reference point—
Is buddhahood held in one's hand, the actual result.
The various categories of the path, such as ground, path, and result,
Are simply conventional expressions for qualities imputed to the basis of designation.

Uniting these into one point is the actual distinguishing feature of the Kagyü [teachings].
This is the very ground for the realization of the victorious ones of the three times.
The widely renowned mahāmudrā, the path of liberation, is—
Despite the inner state pervading everywhere—
The instructions concerning one point, renowned as the Kagyü [teachings].

In particular, considering this distinctive feature of the precious rosary of the lineage of meaning,
The practice lineage of the Karma Kaṃtsang—
How can it be within the sphere of experience imputed by those other logicians?
It is the lamp for fortunate ones of the lineage of meaning and blessings.
But the experience of those without connection is like the eye consciousness of an owl.[a]
Each experiences his or her own karmic share—what can be done?
No matter how they explain the different tenets,
They [i.e., logicians] are distracted with only delineating the two truths.

a. Tibetans believe that owls cannot see during the day. (DPR)

Although the relative truth is merely true in terms of conceptuality,
It is nonarising, having the nature of a sky lotus.
Like the expanse of the sky, it never arises from or ceases within
The abiding nature, the nature of the ultimate truth.[297]

Not transcending suchness, it is dharmatā itself.
For those without realization, the two truths appear as separate.
When there is realization, there is only suchness; if 164f
you assert something different from that,
You have gone wrong.

The secret point of the unmistaken ultimate nature
[Is the sphere of experience] only for those who have the power to see it directly
Through the force of key instructions and blessings,
And for the buddhas themselves;
It is not an object [of experience] for anyone else; it is only conceptually imputed [for them].

This wonderful path that reveals these key instructions—
Whatever they are called, be it *Mahāmudrā*, mahāsandhi, madhyamaka, and so forth—
Is the great secret, the final provisional and *Definitive* [meanings], the life-force of everything.

The all-pervasive lord, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, [commissioned]
The new wood-blocks of this text, which [now] reside in the dharma camp of Karma,
So that this path, which accomplishes the *Ocean of the Meaning* of the profound,
May free all mother [sentient beings], whose numbers are as vast as the extent of space, from [cyclic] existence;
So that they may [attain] the siddhi of Vajradhara in this very life;

So that the teachings of the Victorious One, in general, and, specifically, the teachings of the practice lineage
May spread throughout all directions;
And so that the thunderous renown of the practice traditions may spread throughout the three levels [of existence].†
Through this merit, may the teachings of the Victorious One flourish and remain for a long time.

Those are the aspiration verses for this printing. Taking the excellent command of the glorious Karmapa upon my head, I, an inferior subject with respect for him, who [merely] has the guise of a monk, who aspires to take mahāmudrā as the path, one with only three ideas,† Karma Tendzin, also called by the other names of Chökyi Dawa, or Gyalse Chökyi Lodrö,[a] composed this [dedication].

SARVA MAṄGALAṂ

a. The first Dhilyak Druppön Rinpoche.

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY ROOT VERSES FOR THE INSTRUCTIONS ON MAHĀMUDRĀ, CONNATE UNION

By Wangchuk Dorje

NAMO MAHĀMUDRĀYA

The presentation of mahāmudrā, connate union, has three sections:

I. The Preliminaries

II. The Actual Practice

III. The Concluding Topics

I. THE PRELIMINARIES

A. THE FOUR COMMON PRELIMINARIES

1. THE DIFFICULTIES OF ACQUIRING THE LEISURES AND OPPORTUNITIES [OF A PRECIOUS HUMAN EXISTENCE]

The first object of meditation: This precious [human existence] with its leisures and opportunities is difficult to attain and easily destroyed. Therefore, you must now make it meaningful.

2. IMPERMANENCE

The entire world and its inhabitants are impermanent. In particular,[298] the life-force of beings is like a bubble of water. The time of death is uncertain. When you die and [your body] becomes a corpse, [only] the dharma will be of help. Thus you must practice it with diligence.

3. KARMA AND ITS RESULTS

At death you will have no freedom;[299] you will be controlled by your karma. You must abandon negative actions and constantly engage in virtuous actions.

4. THE FAULTS OF SAṂSĀRA

Your home, friends, happiness, and wealth in saṃsāra constantly torment you with the three types of suffering,† just like a feast before the executioner leads you to your death. You should therefore cut all attachments and entanglements and strive to attain awakening.[300]

B. THE FOUR UNCOMMON PRELIMINARIES

1. REFUGE AND BODHICHITTA

Visualize clearly the objects of refuge and assembly of deities. Think that you and all your mother [sentient beings] are in their presence in order to take refuge. Take refuge and, meditating on the four immeasurables,† arouse bodhichitta from your heart.

2. VAJRASATTVA MEDITATION

Imagine Vajrasattva on the top of your head with his mantra [in his heart center]. By confessing [your negative actions] and vowing to refrain [from repeating them], a stream of nectar falls. This enters your body and purifies all your negative actions and obscurations. By reciting the hundred-syllable mantra, your obscurations will be purified and the signs will manifest.

3. MAṆḌALA OFFERING

Visualize the five offering-piles on the practice [maṇḍala] as the five jewels.† With the offering maṇḍala, make numerous [offerings, both] real and imagined.[301] The signs of having perfected the two accumulations will arise gradually.

4. GURU YOGA

Meditating that your guru is on the top of your head, supplicate him or her with strong devotion and take the four empowerments. If you serve the guru through the five ways of pleasing, the signs of having received his or her compassionate blessings will appear.

At the conclusion of the sessions, the objects of refuge, Vajrasattva, the assembly of deities on the practice maṇḍala, and the guru melt into light and dissolve into you. Think that you become inseparable from their body, speech, and mind.

C. THE SPECIAL PRELIMINARIES

1. THE CAUSAL CONDITION

The casual condition is to be without attachments.

2. THE EMPOWERING CONDITION

The empowering condition is to be guided by [any of] the four types of gurus.

3. THE OBJECT CONDITION

The object condition is not to be confused about the object of meditation.

4. THE PROXIMATE CONDITION

The proximate condition is to be without hope and fear, to be free from rejecting and adopting, blocking and producing, and to sustain [awareness] with whatever arises.

II. THE ACTUAL PRACTICE

A. SHAMATHA

1. THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE BODY[a]

The essential points concerning the body are to hold the seven-point posture of meditative concentration flawlessly.

2. THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE MIND

Cut through the conceptual elaborations of the three times and rest within whatever arises.

a) THE GENERAL [EXPLANATION]

b) THE DETAILED [PRESENTATION]

i) SETTLING THE MIND THAT HAS NOT SETTLED

(a) [CONCENTRATING] USING AN OBJECT

(i) [CONCENTRATING ON] SOMETHING EXTERNAL

I. [CONCENTRATING ON] SOMETHING IMPURE

[Concentrate using] a crystal, a pebble, a wall, a candle flame, and so forth.

II. [CONCENTRATING ON] SOMETHING PURE

Concentrate on the form of the Tathāgata. Problems with dullness and agitation are corrected by the gazes.

(ii) [CONCENTRATING ON] SOMETHING INTERNAL

Meditate on either the guru or yidam, or their essence in the form of a sphere of light, in the center of your heart.

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a. Note that the outline given here differs from the one in *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* where shamatha has two sections: 1. The General Explanation and 2. The Detailed Presentation. 1. The General Presentation has two parts: a) The Essential Points concerning the Body and b) The Essential Points concerning the Mind.

(b) [CONCENTRATING] WITHOUT AN OBJECT

Dissolve the four elements one into the other and concentrate on emptiness.

(c) [CONCENTRATING] ON THE BREATH

Concentrate using vase breathing or counting [the breath].

ii) STABILIZING THE SETTLED [MIND]

Meditate that at your heart center there is either a white or black lotus, with either a white or black bindu [at its center], depending on whether you [are experiencing] dullness or agitation. Or you can continually alternate those [methods] in your meditation.

Further, there are the nine methods [for bringing the mind] to rest:

1. Placement
2. Continuous placement
3. Definite placement
4. Thorough placement
5. Taming
6. [Pacification]
7. Thorough pacification
8. Creating a single continuum
9. Even placement

iii) ENHANCING THE STABILIZATION

Concentrate specifically on the six [sense] objects or whatever mental objects arise—be they virtuous or nonvirtuous—without blocking them or encouraging them. Do frequent, short sessions. Be loose by relaxing and yet exert yourself. There is a list of points for removing hindrances and enhancing development.

B. VIPASHYANĀ

1. LOOKING AT THE ESSENCE OF MIND

Thoroughly determine the essence [of your mind] by thinking, "What is the essence, color, shape, form, and so forth of the resting mind and the moving mind? Where does [the mind] abide? Where does it go? What is its arising, abiding, and departing like?"

2. CUTTING THROUGH A BASIS OR ROOT [OF MIND][302]

Look to see whether that [mind] has any color, shape, and so forth while it is resting and while it is moving. Also investigate the looker. Analyze whether the resting and the moving [mind] are the same or different.

The development [of your practice] is enhanced by the eleven applications:

1. A complete search
2. An individual examination
3. A detailed analysis
4. Shamatha
5. Vipashyanā
6. Unification
7. Clarity
8. Nonconceptuality
9. Equanimity
10. Continuity
11. Nondistraction

3. DETERMINING AWARENESS-EMPTINESS

Since the naked ordinary mind cannot be identified, it is pointed out to be empty. At this point, there are numerous questions and pointing-out instructions [that can be used].

a) POINTING OUT [THE NATURE OF MIND] ON THE BASIS OF CONCEPTUAL MOVEMENT

Look at trying to generate various thoughts all at once; at happy and sad thoughts; and at thoughts involving the five poisons. Recognize that thoughts are a kindness. There are [sections concerned with] questioning, removing hindrances, and enhancing development.

b) POINTING OUT [THE NATURE OF MIND] ON THE BASIS OF APPEARANCES

i) POINTING OUT APPEARANCES TO BE MIND

To recognize that all appearances (such as focal supports) are nothing other than mental appearances, like dreams, and to recognize that the body and mind are neither the same nor different is the pointing out that appearances are mind.

ii) POINTING OUT MIND TO BE EMPTY[303]

See that mind is empty—free from arising, abiding, and ceasing—like the moon reflected in water.

iii) POINTING OUT EMPTINESS TO BE SPONTANEOUSLY PRESENT

Although empty, [mind] manifests unceasingly as the appearances of the expressive power.

iv) POINTING OUT SPONTANEOUS PRESENCE TO BE SELF-LIBERATED

Because appearances are spontaneously present as great emptiness, all the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are beyond being something to be adopted and rejected. Primordial awakening manifests.

Those are the meditations sessions of the actual practice.

III. The Concluding Topics

A. The Way to Enhance the Development [of One's Practice] and Become Proficient in It[304]

1. Correcting the Five Types of Mistaken Ideas

a) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Objects

Positive and negative objects should not be adopted or rejected.

b) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Time

The three times are equal and should not be taken to be real.

c) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about the Essence

There does not exist a wisdom that is higher than the mind.

d) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about the Nature

There is no buddha apart from the mind.

e) Correcting Mistaken Ideas about Knowledge

Realization does not arise from hearing, reflecting, or analysis; it arises swiftly through the power of blessings.

2. Training in the Three Skills

a) The Skill in Initiating [Meditation]

Look [while remaining] within an uncontrived, fresh, relaxed state.

b) The Skill in Suspending [Meditation]

Alter the samādhi and the physical posture.

c) The Skill in Sustaining [Experiences]

Give up attachments or aversions towards positive or negative [meditation] experiences.

3. Enhancing Development through Eliminating Deviations and Strayings

a) Correcting the Four Deviations

i) Correcting Deviations from [Emptiness As] the Basic Nature

By analyzing and so forth, you may think that the nature of objects of knowledge is "this way." Such intellectual contrivances should be given up, and you should train with the unceasing appearances of the expressive power.

ii) Correcting Deviations from [Emptiness As] the Seal

The emptiness [that is imputed by] mantra or mind is not the actual [emptiness], and yet you may conceptually "seal" [appearances with that] and meditate. This is corrected by sustaining the essence of ordinary mind itself.

iii) Correcting Deviations from [Emptiness As] the Remedy

You may take pride in having eradicated the mental afflictions and so forth with emptiness, and take what is to be abandoned and the remedy to be two [separate things]. This is corrected by looking at the very nature of the factors to be abandoned.

iv) Correcting Deviations from [Emptiness As] the Path

You may think that there is no path other than emptiness and take that to be supreme, without considering the aspect of method. This is corrected by [recognizing] the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and by being free from striving.

b) Enhancement through Correcting Strayings in Meditation

If you are attached to the experiences of bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality, you will stray into the three realms. These [attachments] should be abandoned.[305] You should be free from

attachments and arouse diligence. At this point, enhancement gives rise to the result.

4. Enhancement through Removing the Enemies that Arise in the Three Difficult Passages

a) Emptiness Arising As an Enemy

You may think that everything is empty and neglect taking up virtue and rejecting evil. This is corrected by training in the path that integrates the view and conduct [while remaining] within the state of emptiness.

b) Compassion Arising As an Enemy

You might put aside your own samādhi and dharma practice, even though you have not perfected it, and act for the welfare of others. This will [only] exhaust yourself and others. While remaining in a state of compassion for others, you should maintain your own dharma practice.

c) Cause and Result Arising As an Enemy

Seeing that [everything] is conceptually created, you may undertake [the study of] terms, valid cognition, and so forth, thinking that this will produce omniscient knowledge. You put aside true dharma practice. This is corrected by meditating on the union of emptiness and [the relationship between] causes and their results.

B. Removing Hindrances[306]

1. Removing the Hindrance of Illness

You should cut through the basis and root of illness. Or you can practice "taking and sending," seeing [illness] as the four kāyas,[307] and so forth.

2. Removing the Hindrance of Demons

Demons appear from the delusion of your own mind but they do not, in fact, truly exist. [By knowing that,] you cut through the basis and root [of demons]. Or you can practice taking and sending, bringing them [to the path] as the four kāyas, and so forth.

3. Removing the Hindrances to Samādhi

The hindrances for samādhi are categorized as either dullness or agitation. These are removed by the [meditation] techniques, conduct, guru [yoga], looking at their essence, and so forth.

C. The Way to Progress on the Path in Terms of the Four Yogas[308]

One-pointedness is to rest in the inseparability of shamatha and vipashyanā. Freedom from elaborations is to realize that all phenomena are empty. One taste is when all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa arise as one taste. Nonmeditation is when there is no object of meditation or a meditator.

These are taught as being [divided into] twelve levels of lesser, intermediate, or greater [degrees depending on whether] they are unstable, stable, or very stable, and whether they are slightly realized, mostly realized, or completely realized.

One-pointedness is the paths of accumulation and preparation. Freedom from elaborations is the path of seeing. One taste [and the stages] up through intermediate nonmeditation are the path of meditation. Greater nonmeditation is complete buddhahood.

D. The Result

Through practicing in this way, you will cut through all obscurations with the sword of knowledge, [attain] actual buddhahood and, through the activity of the three[309] kāyas, benefit others until saṃsāra is empty.

This root verse summary of mahāmudrā, connate union, which is a brief mnemonic device, was requested by Loppön Choklang. It was written by the one [who wanders] in the ten directions, called Vajreshvara,[a] on the slope of Vaishravaṇa mountain.

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a. The ninth exalted one, Wangchuk Dorje (note in Tibetan text).

Appendix II

Opening the Door to the Definitive Meaning

Conveniently Arranged Root Verses Summarizing Mahāmudrā, the Ocean of Definitive Meaning

By Bokar Rinpoche

OṂ SVASTI
The guru's and my own mind
Are inseparable in the intrinsic state.
I pay homage to this and take refuge
In it at all times.

With the intention to benefit those who wish to practice *The Profound Instructions on Mahāmudrā, Connate Union*, I have given the outline of the text and, in order to facilitate the practice of those stages of meditation, I have composed brief, clear [verses] that can be used either as summarizing root verses or for combining recitation and meditation.

I. THE PRELIMINARIES

A. THE FOUR COMMON PRELIMINARIES

1. THE DIFFICULTIES OF ACQUIRING THE LEISURES AND OPPORTUNITIES [OF A PRECIOUS HUMAN EXISTENCE]

NAMO GURUBHYAḤ
Those practicing the genuine dharma correctly
Should abandon distractions and [reflect on] the first meditation topic as follows:
This excellent support, [a human existence] endowed with the eight leisures and ten opportunities,
Is difficult to acquire and extremely beneficial.

It resembles the qualities of a wish-fulfilling jewel.
In particular, this vajra body of the six elements
[Capable of] achieving awakening in one lifetime
Through the Vajrayāna is even more rare.

Furthermore, [explanations concerning] its causes, examples, and numbers
[Demonstrate] that it is difficult to acquire
And, once acquired, very easily destroyed.
Henceforth, you should exert yourself in the practice of the genuine, true dharma.

2. DEATH AND IMPERMANENCE

All composite phenomena—what is outer and inner, the environment and beings—
Are not permanent for even a moment, as is evident through the four ends.†
In particular, the life-force of beings
Is like a candle flame in the wind or a bubble of water.

Furthermore, it is certain that you will die
And, since death comes without warning, you may die soon.
The circumstances [conducive to] death are so many that, even though it is unwanted, you will die.
No one has the ability to avert it.

At the time of death, overwhelming suffering is experienced.
At that time, there is no refuge other than the genuine dharma.
Therefore, shorten your perspective and develop weariness [for saṃsāra].
With a strong sense of urgency, apply yourself to what is virtuous.

3. KARMIC CAUSES AND RESULTS

Following death, you will be like a lamp whose oil is exhausted.
In other words, you will lack any control over where you will be born.
Without any control, you must follow your karma.
In general, it is taught that the various appearances of happiness and suffering
Are the result of virtuous and negative karma.

Moreover, you should specifically consider the way that engaging in the ten virtuous actions brings birth in the higher states
And engaging in the ten nonvirtues, under the influence of the mental afflictions,
Brings birth in the lower states.

In brief, the maturation of actions you have done will never be lost.
It is certain that some time you will experience them.
Apply yourself to adopting correctly what is virtuous and rejecting what is negative,
And to examining your mind-stream.

4. THE FAULTS OF SAṂSĀRA

No matter where you are born among the six classes of beings throughout the three realms of saṃsāra,
You will be tormented constantly by [one or more of] the three types of suffering.†

Consider the very painful and long-lasting sufferings
of heat and cold experienced by hell beings,
Of hunger and thirst experienced by hungry ghosts,
And of being eaten experienced by animals.

Likewise, consider the sufferings
Of birth, aging, sickness, death, and so forth experienced by humans,
Of fighting experienced by demigods, and of falling
[to a lower realm] experienced by gods.

The superficial and trifling pleasures and wealth of
[cyclic] existence
Should be cast far away, like food laced with poison.
Now you must apply yourself to the methods that will
definitely bring liberation
From saṃsāra, which is like a fiery pit.

B. THE PRACTICES OF THE FOUR UNCOMMON PRELIMINARIES

1. THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING REFUGE AND DEVELOPING BODHICHITTA, WHICH ENABLE ONE TO BECOME A WORTHY RECIPIENT OR CAUSE ALL ONE'S ACTIONS TO BECOME THE PATH TO LIBERATION

The [only] refuge [capable of providing] protection
from those sufferings of [cyclic] existence
Is the three jewels; there is no other.
In order that yourself and others—all beings who pervade space—
May take refuge, visualize as follows:

In the sky in front there is a wish-fulfilling tree with
five branches.
In the center where [the branches] divide there is a
lion throne, lotus, and moon.
On top of this is your root guru, [who appears as] the
powerful Vajradhara,
Complete with the major and minor marks, seated in
a radiant brilliance.

Above him are the gurus of the lineage, one above
the other.
In front, to the right, to the rear, and to the left are,
respectively,
The yidams, buddhas, dharma, and saṅgha,
Gathered like masses of billowing clouds.

Until awakening is attained, you and all beings take
refuge
And give rise to bodhichitta.
In the end, the objects of refuge melt into light and
dissolve into your three doors.
Rest in your own intrinsic state.

2. THE MEDITATION AND RECITATION OF VAJRASATTVA, WHICH PURIFY NEGATIVE ACTIONS AND OBSCURATIONS

All the negative actions and downfalls that you have
accumulated throughout beginningless [time]
Should be confessed by means of the four powers.
In particular, [of the remedies that constitute] the
power of applying remedies,
The supreme is the meditation and recitation of
Vajrasattva.

To practice this, [conceive of] yourself in the ordinary
way and
Visualize the guru Vajrasattva on top of your head .
He is white, holding a five-pronged vajra to his heart
with his right hand,
Resting a bell on his hip with his left hand, and sitting
in the bodhisattva position.

Visualize his form as appearing and yet lacking any
inherent nature.
In his heart center is a moon, on top of which is a
HŪṂ encircled by the hundred-syllable mantra.
A stream of nectar falls from that and enters through
your opening of Brahmā,

Purifying all your negative actions, obscurations, and
broken or impaired [samaya].

Further supplication pleases [Vajrasattva], who says,
"Your negative actions and obscurations are purified."
Having given his assurance, he melts into light and
dissolves into you.
You are inseparable from his three vajras.[†]

3. THE MAṆḌALA [OFFERING], WHICH PERFECTS THE TWO ACCUMULATIONS

The accumulations of merit and wisdom are gathered
Through the supreme method of offering the realms.
To do this, visualize the practice maṇḍala,
Which is made of precious substances and is flawless,
As a palace complete with all the attributes.

In the center of this visualize the root and lineage
gurus and,
In each of the four directions, the yidams, buddhas,
dharma, and saṅgha,
Along with the ḍākas, ḍākinīs, and wisdom guardians.

[Seated] in front of that, holding the offering
maṇḍala,
Imagine and offer billions of [world systems composed
of] Mount Meru,
The four continents, subcontinents, and so forth,
As well as the bodies, wealth, and roots of virtue of
Yourself and all beings, whose numbers are as vast as
the extent of space.

Through the power of this, you perfect the two accu-
mulations
And the deities, in a pleased state, melt into light and
dissolve into you,
So that [you and the deities] are nondual.

4. THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR GURU YOGA, WHICH SWIFTLY CONFER BLESSINGS

The basis for all excellent qualities and,
Moreover, the supreme method for realizing the ulti-
mate, mahāmudrā,
Is the glorious guru's blessings—there is nothing else.

To practice that yoga,
Visualize yourself as the yidam
And your root guru as the powerful Vajradhara above
your head.
Above him are the lineage gurus, arranged one above
the other.
Around him are the yidams, buddhas, bodhisattvas,
Ḍākas, ḍākinīs, and wisdom guardians.

Through the power of making offerings and supplicat-
ing them with longing,
The retinue dissolves into the central figure,
Who thus becomes the embodiment of the sources of
refuge.

By supplicating him to bestow the empowerments,
you receive the four empowerments,
Which purify the four obscurations and plant the
seeds of the four kāyas.
Then the guru, in a pleased state, melts into light and
dissolves into you.
Rest evenly within mahāmudrā.

C. THE FOUR SPECIAL PRELIMINARIES

1. THE CAUSAL CONDITION

By taming your own mind-stream, developing renun-
ciation,
And aspiring for liberation, cut off all attachments
and entanglements.
Remain alone in a very isolated place,
Free from internal and external distractions, and give
up all activities.

2. THE EMPOWERING CONDITION

Since the path that brings the realization of mahāmudrā relies solely on a guru, you must be guided by an authentic spiritual mentor.

a) THE GURU WHO IS AN INDIVIDUAL IN A LINEAGE

The first is a guru who belongs to an authentic lineage
In which the stream of blessings and key instructions
Has been conveyed uninterruptedly and sequentially
From Vajradhara down to his or her root guru.

b) THE GURU WHO [APPEARS AS] THE WORDS OF THE SUGATA

Certainty in regard to your own mind develops
In accordance with what the guru taught.
Because you [recognize] that there is no contradiction between those [teachings of the guru] and the words of the Victorious One,
All [the Buddha's] teachings manifest as instructions.

c) THE GURU WHO [MANIFESTS AS] SYMBOLIC APPEARANCES

Because all phenomena of saṃsāra or nirvāṇa—
The elements and what is composed of the elements, both outer and inner things—
Demonstrate the modes of the path through symbols and illustrations,
There is nothing that is not a guru.

d) THE GURU WHO IS THE ULTIMATE DHARMATĀ

Through directly seeing, realizing, and determining in an unmistaken way
The abiding nature of your mind
That was pointed out by the glorious guru,
You realize the suchness of all phenomena.

3. THE OBJECT CONDITION

Without being influenced by either Buddhist or non-Buddhist philosophical tenets or
[Allowing your mind] to be adulterated by concepts,
Bring into experience the essence of mind,
The primordial abiding nature, the play of the three kāyas.

4. THE PROXIMATE CONDITION

When bringing into experience the actual practice,
Maintain the essence of ordinary mind,
Which does not conceive of an object of meditation or a meditator
And which is without any adopting or rejecting, hope or fear, or any fabrication.

II. THE ACTUAL PRACTICE

A. SHAMATHA

1. THE GENERAL EXPLANATION

a) THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE BODY

The essential points for the body are the seven-point posture of Vairochana:
(1) [Place] your legs in the vajra position and (2) your hands in the position of meditative equipoise.
(3) Raise your shoulders, so that they resemble the wings of a vulture.
(4) Bend your neck, so that it resembles an iron hook.
(5) Straighten your spine, so that it resembles an arrow.
(6) Direct your gaze into space four finger-widths from the tip of your nose.
(7) Let your lips and teeth be natural and rest your tongue on your palate.
Sit on a comfortable seat.

b) THE ESSENTIAL POINTS CONCERNING THE MIND

The essential points for the mind are as is said:
"Do not reflect. Do not think. Do not speculate. Do not meditate.
Do not analyze. Rest [the mind] in its own place."

The momentary ordinary mind
Is free from blocking or producing, abandoning or adopting, hope or fear,
And from the solidification of taking things to be real.
Be totally relaxed in its nature and, with undistracted one-pointedness,
Rest loosely, free from contrivance in clarity-emptiness without fixation.

2. THE DETAILED PRESENTATION

a) SETTLING THE MIND THAT HAS NOT SETTLED

i) CONCENTRATING USING AN OBJECT

(a) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING EXTERNAL

(i) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING IMPURE

Hold the gaze and the essential points for the body properly.
Direct [your attention] to any large form
In front of you, such as a pillar, a wall, and so forth.
Rest evenly without being distracted towards anything else.

Likewise, concentrate unwaveringly on a small form
In front, such as a small piece of wood or a pebble.
Alternatively, use a candle flame, [an area of] space,
Or a white bindu the size of a pea at the point between the eyebrows
As the focal support and concentrate on that.

(ii) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING PURE

Visualize in front of you
The perfect Buddha, the Bhagavat,

With his color, attributes, major and minor marks, and so forth.
Respectfully direct [your attention] to him and concentrate.

(b) CONCENTRATING ON SOMETHING INTERNAL

In the center of an eight-petalled lotus at your heart,
Generate whichever yidam you prefer or meditate on your guru.
Or concentrate on a sphere of brilliant light
That is their essence.

With all these focal supports, be undistracted,
Use the gazes, and be free from the fault of being [too] tight or [too] loose.
Other than simply posting the watchman of awareness, remain without contrivance.
Without abandoning or adopting, free from hope and fear,
Rest naturally settled, totally relaxed, lightly and freely (*'bol le shig ge*).

ii) CONCENTRATING WITHOUT AN OBJECT

Concentrate on the great emptiness
Of all inner and outer phenomena all at once.
Or dissolve all of those one into another
And rest evenly in great emptiness, luminosity.

iii) CONCENTRATING ON THE BREATH

To concentrate on the breath, direct [your attention] to vase breathing (*bum can*).
Or count twenty-one [sets of the breath] and so forth,
Where the inhalation, pause, and exhalation are considered one.
Exert yourself in doing frequent short sessions with undistracted, sharp, lucid clarity.

By meditating on these key instructions,

The three levels of resting will gradually develop:
(1) Like water falling from a mountain cliff,
(2) Like a slowly flowing river, and
(3) Like an unmoving ocean.

b) STABILIZING THE SETTLED [MIND]

i) HOLDING THE MIND

(a) HOLDING ABOVE

Concentrate on a white bindu the size of a pea
That is in the middle of a four-petalled lotus at your heart.
Hold your breath. As you exhale, think that
The bindu exits through the opening of Brahmā and settles in the expanse of space.

Meditate for a long time
With your physical posture and gaze directed upwards,
Your mind uplifted, and your awareness intensified.

(b) HOLDING BELOW

The second holding is [to visualize]
In the middle of a black, upside-down four-petalled lotus at your heart
A black bindu the size of a pea.

This [bindu] spirals down, like a spider's thread,
And exits through your secret place.
It [moves] slowly downwards until it settles with a heavy quality many miles below.
Rest your mind one-pointedly [on this].
Contract your anal sphincter and let your physical posture and gaze settle downwards.

(c) THE YOGA OF ALTERNATING

Alternate these two techniques
According to your particular state [of mind]:

If your mind is [too] elevated, bring it down; if it is [too] low, uplift it.
Be constantly diligent, like the flow of a river.

ii) THE NINE METHODS FOR BRINGING THE MIND TO REST

(1) Placement; (2) continuous placement; (3) definite placement;
(4) Thorough placement; (5) taming; (6) pacification;
(7) Thorough pacification; (8) creating a single continuum; and (9) even placement.

These are as follows:
(1) Place [your mind] by directing [your attention] one-pointedly to a given object.
(2) Rest on that for a long time.
(3) If a thought arises,
Immediately recognize it with mindfulness and rest in equipoise.

(4) Rest in equipoise, blending that even resting
With the previous resting state.
(5) Generate joy by recollecting the excellent qualities of the resting mind
And remain in that state.

(6) Rest [your mind] by being certain and by identifying which conditions stimulate [thoughts],
And counteract any fixation to them.
(7) Recognize the essence of the causes of distraction, mental unhappiness, and so forth
And self-liberate them.

(8) Through the force of meditating in that way,
[Your mind] naturally settles on the object and rests without any effort.
(9) In the end, be free from the distractions
[Of being concerned] about whether you are resting in meditative equipoise or not.

c) ENHANCING THE STABILIZATION

Direct your attention to forms that appear as objects for your eyes.
Likewise, take sounds and so forth one after another
As the focal object and rest one-pointedly.

Furthermore, without regarding thoughts as a problem, rest quietly right within them.
Alternate between tightening [your concentration] and relaxing.
In particular, the supreme [way] to remove hindrances and enhance [practice] is to supplicate the guru
And, with devotion, mix [the guru's] mind and your own mind as one.

B. VIPASHYANĀ

1. LOOKING AT THE ABIDING NATURE, THE ESSENCE OF MIND

The way to look at the abiding nature, the essence of mind,
Is to let [your mind] settle into itself, without any contrivance and in a totally relaxed way.
Look repeatedly, analyzing
Its essence, color, form, shape, and so forth.

If you ask what the essence of that resting is,
It must be that it is clear, sharp (*hrig ge*), and naked.
If nothing is found by searching [the mind] at rest,
Allow thoughts to manifest and analyze them.

2. CUTTING THROUGH A BASIS OR ROOT [OF MIND]

The way to cut through a basis or root [of mind] is as follows:
If you do not find anything when searching, examine the searcher,
The arising, abiding, and departing of that mind, and so forth.
Search again and again.

Furthermore, there are eleven applications:
(1) A complete search; (2) an individual examination;
(3) A detailed analysis; (4) shamatha; (5) vipashyanā;
(6) Unification; (7) clarity; (8) nonconceptuality; (9) equanimity;
(10) Continuity; and (11) nondistraction.

These points are as follows:
(1) Asking, "Does the mind [inherently] exist or not? What is its essence like?"
Continually search your mind-stream.

(2) Specifically, cut through [whether the mind has] a color or shape;
Arises, abides, or departs; has a basis, and so forth.
(3) Look definitively for the searcher and that which searches.

(4) By searching, you realize that your mind lacks an inherent nature.
Because you determine the abiding nature of all phenomena,
Rest your mind fully in the profound reality.
(5) By searching the essence of that resting [mind] itself in the same way you did before,
Fully realize its very essence.

(6) Those [i.e., shamatha and vipashyanā] are not different; do not separate them.
(7) If dullness or sluggishness arise,
Bring to mind whatever stimulates it, and uplift your mind.
(8) When scattering or agitation occur, exert yourself in the methods that pacify.

(9) When you are free from dullness or agitation,
Rest in the essence [of the mind] that was searched for, examined, and analyzed.
(10) Never be separated from this kind of yoga.

(11) Tightening your attention upon this [yoga],
Do not allow any occasion for distraction [to arise].

Exert yourself again and again in cutting through a basis or root [of mind]
By means of these eleven applications.

3. Pointing Out [the Nature of Mind] by Means of Determining Awareness-Emptiness

The pointing-out instructions by means of determining awareness-emptiness are as follows:
First, let your mind relax in its own state.
Look nakedly at the essence of the relaxed mind.
Maintain continuous mindfulness, simply free from distraction.

Whatever thoughts arise, do not do anything contrived,
Such as deliberately abandoning or adopting them.
Rest with sharpness (*hrig ger*) in the moment of ordinary mind:
Naked clarity-emptiness, which cannot be conceptually identified.

a) Pointing Out [the Nature of Mind] on the Basis of Conceptual Movement

Pointing out [the nature of mind] on the basis of conceptual movement is as follows:
First, let mind relax in its own state.
Within that state, look directly at its very essence.
Then cause conceptual movement.

What is the difference between the moving mind and the resting mind?
Look to see what the difference is between the moving mind and the mind that looks at it.
Through doing this, conceptual movement is self-liberated.
Rest one-pointedly without distraction in that state.

b) Pointing Out [the Nature of Mind] on the Basis of Appearances

i) Pointing Out Appearances to Be Mind

Examine whether forms and so forth (which are taken as focal supports)
And the mind are the same or different.
When you realize through doing this that all objects that appear as something external
Do not exist apart from being the self-radiance of mind,
Rest openly (*phyad de*) and without fixation in that state.

ii) Pointing Out Mind to Be Empty

Mind-itself is emptiness; it does not exist as any thing.
This cannot be shown at all.
It is beyond the expressions of speech or thought and resembles space.
Rest uncontrived and loose (*lhug par*) in this state.

iii) Pointing Out Emptiness to Be Spontaneously Present

Without moving from emptiness, dharm[atā],
The radiant expressive power [of mind] arises unceasingly as the variety [of appearances].
Recognize that all phenomena within saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are not other than emptiness:
They are the spontaneously present inseparability of appearances and emptiness.

iv) Pointing Out Spontaneous Presence to Be Self-Liberated

Appearances, awareness, and emptiness are spontaneously present
As the union of luminosity and emptiness from the beginning.

As this does not rely upon any remedies [involving]
rejecting or adopting, eliminating or producing,
It is the ultimate self-liberation, mahāmudrā.

III. THE CONCLUDING TOPICS

Having experienced the essence [of mind] as pointed out by the guru, [there are four points to be considered]:

A. The Way to Enhance the Development [of One's Practice] and Become Proficient in It
B. Removing Hindrances
C. The Way to Progress on the Path
D. The Way to Manifest the Result

A. THE WAY TO ENHANCE THE DEVELOPMENT [OF ONE'S PRACTICE] AND BECOME PROFICIENT IN IT

1. ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CORRECTING THE FIVE TYPES OF MISTAKEN IDEAS

a) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT OBJECTS

Mistaken ideas about objects are corrected by [recognizing]—
Without the fixation that solidifies saṃsāra as something to be abandoned or nirvāṇa as something to be attained—
That all dualistic phenomena (such as virtue and evil)
Are of equal taste in the expanse of nondual wisdom.

b) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT TIME

The three times do not exist as real entities,
Nevertheless, ignorant ones assign the divisions of the three times.
Therefore, realizing that the three times do not exist as separate [entities],
That they are equal, corrects mistaken ideas about time.

c) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT THE ESSENCE

It is wrong to assert that once the present mind is abandoned
Wisdom will be attained.
Recognizing that your own mind is of the nature of the five wisdoms from the beginning
Corrects mistaken ideas about the essence.

d) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT THE NATURE

Sentient beings' skandhas, dhātus, and āyatanas
Are primordially of the nature of the male and female tathāgatas
And the male and female deities.
To recognize this corrects mistaken ideas about the nature.

e) CORRECTING MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE

The ultimate nature is not an object
For those who are very knowledgeable or who are logicians.
It is realized through the blessing of the guru and by fortunate ones with karmic continuity.†
To understand this corrects mistaken ideas about knowledge.

2. TRAINING IN THE THREE SKILLS

a) IN THE BEGINNING: THE SKILL IN INITIATING MEDITATION

Hold the essential points for the body properly.
When thinking, look right at that; when resting, look right at the essence of that resting.
Rest within an uncontrived, fresh, relaxed, and naturally settled state without distraction
And with recognition of your own nature.

b) IN THE MIDDLE: THE SKILL IN SUSPENDING MEDITATION

No matter what you are meditating on, do not make the length of time the main point.
Change the samādhi and the physical posture.
Do short, frequent sessions with forceful, lucid clarity.
Do not leave your meditation hating it; generate enthusiasm.

c) IN THE END: THE SKILL IN SUSTAINING EXPERIENCES

If you cling to any of the three types of experiences—
Bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality—and develop pride,
What is called "losing realizations after experiences" will occur.
Therefore, sustain [experiences while remaining] in a state free from attachment to experiences.

3. ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ELIMINATING DEVIATIONS AND STRAYINGS

a) [ELIMINATING THE FOUR] DEVIATIONS

i) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE BASIC NATURE OF OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

You may determine by using scriptures, reasonings, listening, reflecting, or conventional expressions
That the abiding nature of things is emptiness
And say, "Since everything is empty, what is there to meditate on?"
Because this is "established" in a way that is conceptually created, it is not correct.

ii) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE SEAL

What is called "deviating from emptiness as the seal"
Is to regard things as not empty
And to think that they become empty through saying the SHŪNYATĀ mantra and so forth

And to take that as the meditation; this is incorrect.

iii) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE REMEDY

What is known as "deviating from emptiness as the remedy"
Is to think, when thoughts (such as those involving the three poisons) arise,
"I will destroy these with emptiness,"
And then to rest evenly in emptiness; this is flawed.

iv) DEVIATING FROM EMPTINESS AS THE PATH

What is called "deviating from emptiness as the path"
Is to think, although there is no separation between path and result in terms of emptiness,
"This present meditation on emptiness serves as the path.
Later I will attain fruition"; this is not correct.

b) ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ELIMINATING STRAYING IN MEDITATION

The way to enhance practice through eliminating straying
Is presented through seventeen points.
(1) From among the three types of experience (bliss, clarity, and nonconceptuality),
Examine with your knowledge the general state of bliss,

Without distinguishing between defiled and undefiled bliss.
(2) If one completely fixates on that [bliss] during meditation,
One will stray into the desire realm.
(3) In the same way, if one fixates on experiences of clarity, one will stray into the form realm.

(4) If one fixates on nonconceptuality, one will be born in the formless realm.

(5) If one says, "All phenomena are like space,"
And analyzes with one's knowledge, completely fixating on this,
One will be born in the sphere of Limitless Space.

(6) By holding onto the thought that all phenomena are mind,
One strays into the sphere of Limitless Consciousness.
(7) In the same way, if one fixates on the thought that nothing exists,
One will stray into the sphere of Nothingness.

(8) If one fixates on the thought that there is neither existence nor nonexistence and takes this to be supreme,
One will be born in the sphere of Neither Discrimination nor Nondiscrimination.
(9) Therefore, do not be attached to the experiences of bliss, clarity, or nonconceptuality.
[These strayings] are corrected by looking at the very nature [of experience].

(10) If one lacks method and fixates on emptiness,
One will stray into the Hīnayāna.
The way to abandon this is to meditate on kindness, compassion, and bodhichitta.
(11) Method enhances knowledge's development.

(12) Knowledge enhances method's development.
(13) By unifying these two, each one will enhance the development of the other.
(14) The development of shamatha is enhanced by vipashyanā.
(15) The development of vipashyanā is enhanced by shamatha.

(16) In terms of [the practice of] both shamatha and vipashyanā:
On the level of one-pointedness, the development of experiences is enhanced by experiences.
On the level of freedom from elaborations,

The development of realization is enhanced by experiences.

On the level of one taste, the development of realization is enhanced by realization.
By not letting one's three doors remain in their ordinary fashion,
All activities are transformed into a panoply of virtue,
Thereby enhancing the ordinary state with excellent qualities.

(17) Whatever problems arise—such as mental afflictions, sufferings, or obstacles—
Look at their very nature without accepting or rejecting them.
By taking bad omens to be good luck, [one's practice] will be enhanced.

4. Enhancing Development through Crossing the Three Difficult Passages

a) Emptiness Arising As an Enemy

When you look at and analyze the essence of mind,
You see that it does not truly exist as anything.
Therefore, you might think, "Since all phenomena are only emptiness,
Virtue and evil, and causes and results, do not truly exist."

You have no regard for remedies and what is to be abandoned; this is known as "glibness."
This is emptiness arising as an enemy and should be avoided like poison.

b) Compassion Arising As an Enemy

Having achieved some bliss in samādhi,
You may think, "I must liberate all sentient beings who lack this."
Putting aside your own [practice of] samādhi,

You strenuously apply yourself to conditioned virtues
And fixate on those as truly existent.

This is called "compassion arising as an enemy" and should be avoided.
When compassion arises, remain in that state
While sustaining a stainless realization.

c) CAUSE AND RESULT ARISING AS AN ENEMY

If you think, "In order to see the profound abiding nature
I must become well-informed about all objects of knowledge,"
And, taking up [the study of] grammar, valid cognition, and so forth,
You neglect to practice shamatha and vipashyanā,
That is called "the straying where an idea about cause and result arises as an enemy." It is incorrect.

By meditating one-pointedly on the profound reality,
You attain the stainless knowledge that is not ignorant of
All the phenomena of saṃsāra or nirvāṇa.

B. REMOVING HINDRANCES

1. REMOVING THE HINDRANCE OF ILLNESSES

By meditating mainly on shamatha, wind-related illnesses are corrected.
By meditating on vipashyanā, phlegm- and bile-related illnesses are corrected.
Also, hot and cold illnesses
Are corrected gradually by shamatha and vipashyanā.

Analyze the essence, shape, and arising, abiding, and departing of a given illness.
Especially apply yourself to the practice of "taking and sending" (*gtong len*).

Or the nonarising of illness is the dharmakāya;

Its nonabiding is the sambhogakāya; its unceasingness is the nirmāṇakāya;
And its empty nature is the svabhāvakāya.
Bring [illness onto the path] as the play of the four kāyas and look at its very nature.

2. REMOVING THE HINDRANCE OF DEMONS

The way to remove the hindrance of demons is as follows:
What appears as a demon is the magical display of mind.
Mind-itself is brought [to the path] as the four kāyas.
By also bringing demons onto the path as the four kāyas, they are removed.

3. REMOVING THE HINDRANCES TO SAMĀDHI

In general, [the methods for] correcting the problems of dullness and agitation were presented above.
Here [the methods for] correcting these through the practice of guru yoga [are given].

When [your mind] is dull, [visualize] on top of your head the guru Amitābha.
Imagine that all the lineage gurus and others dissolve into him.
Supplicate him with devotion.
Then [visualize] light rays radiating from him and dissolving into yourself.

This completely purifies the causes of dullness.
The guru dissolves into light and melts into yourself.
Your body becomes a sphere of light that illuminates all the pure realms and diffuses into space.
Rest vividly within a state of heightened awareness.

When [your mind] is agitated, visualize the guru Vajrasattva (who is blue)
In the center of a four-petalled lotus at your heart.

Visualize on each of the four petals Vairochana and the other [buddhas of the five families],
Who are all the same color [as Vajrasattva]
And who are surrounded by the ḍākas, ḍākinīs, and others of their respective families.

Visualize blue light rays radiating from their hearts
To the guru and then extending in all directions.
Rest evenly in mahāmudrā. This will correct [agitation].

Further, whichever arises—dullness or agitation—
Rest relaxed within its essence, without distraction, without meditating, and without fabrication.

C. The Way to Progress on the Path

Progress on the path is presented through the four yogas. Each of these is divided into a lesser, intermediate, and greater level, giving twelve levels in all.

1. The Yoga of One-Pointedness

First, what is called the "yoga of one-pointedness"
Is the correct recognition of the very essence of mind.
It is to rest vibrantly and vividly
Within unceasing clarity-emptiness, which is without center or end, like space.

This has three levels: lesser, intermediate, and greater.
The lesser level is to see the essence of bliss-clarity.
The intermediate level is to master samādhi.
The greater is when that experience is continuous.

2. The Yoga of Freedom from Elaborations

Freedom from elaborations is the realization that mind-itself is free from a root.
Having become freed from the conceptual elaborations concerning the arising, abiding, and ceasing of dualistic phenomena

And fixation on their characteristics,
Superimpositions concerning unborn emptiness are cut through.

The lesser level is to realize that one's own mind is nonarising.
The intermediate level is when the apprehension of appearances and the apprehension of emptiness are [realized to be] free from a basis or root.
The greater level is when the superimpositions of elaborations concerning phenomena are severed.

3. The Yoga of One Taste

The yoga of one taste is the blending of appearances and mind.
The phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, all that can appear,
Are neither free from nor not free from the elaborations of arising, abiding, and ceasing; they are neither empty nor not empty;
They are neither something to stop nor something to produce; and they are neither something to abandon nor something to adopt.
They are equal within the intrinsic state.

The lesser level is when all dualistic phenomena are blended as equal taste.
The intermediate level is when appearances and mind are like water poured into water.
The greater level is when all phenomena are pacified within equality.

4. The Yoga of Nonmeditation

Nonmeditation is the purification of previous experiences;
It is the utter exhaustion of the relative mind.

This has three levels: lesser, intermediate, and greater.

The lesser level is when there is no object of meditation or a meditator.

The intermediate level is to take hold of the very place of spontaneous presence.
The greater level is when, through the mixing of the mother and child luminosities,
One is absorbed in the expanse of wisdom, the dharmadhātu,
The two benefits are perfected and one is completely awakened.

THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE TWELVE LEVELS OF THE FOUR YOGAS AND THE PATHS

If one wishes to correlate the twelve yogas
To the bhūmis and paths of the Pāramitā[yāna, it is as follows]:

Lesser one-pointedness is the path of accumulation.
The intermediate level corresponds to the levels of heat and peak on the path of preparation.
The greater level corresponds to the levels of forbearance and supreme mundane qualities.

Lesser freedom from elaborations is the path of seeing and the first bhūmi.
The intermediate level is the second through fifth bhūmis.
The greater level is the attainment of the sixth bhūmi.

The realization of lesser one taste is the seventh bhūmi.
The intermediate level is the eighth. The greater level corresponds to the ninth.
Lesser nonmeditation correlates to the tenth bhūmi.
The intermediate level corresponds to the bhūmi that is the end of the continuum.†
The greater level corresponds to the path of completion and the eleventh bhūmi.

D. THE WAY THE RESULT MANIFESTS

With the arising in the mind-stream of the twelve levels of the four yogas
And the culmination of nonmeditation,
The two obscurations and all habitual tendencies are completely eliminated,
And the full bloom of the wisdom of twofold knowledge is complete.

While not moving from the dharmakāya (which is for one's own benefit),
One's activity to benefit others through the two form kāyas
Continues until saṃsāra is empty
Without involving thoughts, effort, or elaborations.
This is the spontaneously present pervasive nature.

COLOPHON

Through the virtue and effort made here,
Throughout the succession of my births and lives,
May I remain correctly in a renunciation of [cyclic] existence
And never transgress the basis for the trainings even slightly.

May I never forget, even in dreams,
The two kinds of supreme bodhichitta, which benefit others.
May I be able to establish all beings in happiness
Through the four ways of gathering and the six pāramitās.

May I cherish pure spiritual mentors
As I do my life;
And, by delighting them with everything pleasing,
May I abide in faith and samaya.

Through the power of this,
In relation to the piṭakas concerned with individual liberation, bodhisattvas, and vidyādhara-mantra,

May I benefit myself through listening, reflecting, and meditating;
May I benefit others through exposition, debate, and composition;
May I benefit both through being scholarly, well-disciplined, and virtuous;
And may I benefit the teachings by upholding, preserving, and spreading them.

May I perfect all these.
May I correctly realize and transmit to others
The texts on the irreversible definitive meaning
And, especially, mahāmudrā, the abiding nature.
In brief, may I alone be able to establish
All beings, who fill the limits of space,
On the supreme level of true, complete buddhahood.

Through the blessings of the three supreme ones and the victorious ones,
Through the strength of my pure altruistic attitude,
And through the power of the profundity of emptiness and dependent origination,
May this aspiration prayer be achieved accordingly.

Because the *Collection of Root Verses for Meditation* that I compiled from *The Six Dharmas: The Essence of Amṛita* by the sixth Shamarpa, Chökyi Wangchuk, is very convenient when practicing meditation and recitation, I have had the thought for some time that there should be something similar for mahāmudrā. Now, Nedo Kuchung Choktrul Rinpoche and Dhilyak Lama Tsetar during their three-year retreat are printing the root verses for the six dharmas separately. Saying, "We need something like this for mahāmudrā to include with that," they have urgently requested me. In response, I have compiled this with the altruistic intention of wishing to be of some benefit to beginning practitioners.

This was composed by Bokar Tulku Rinpoche, Karma Ngedön Chökyi Lodrö, holder of the name retreat master-guru of the great retreat, called Yi-ong Samten Ling, at

the great seat, Ogmin Shedrup Chökhor Ling, of the glorious Karmapa, lord of the victorious ones. It was written at Bokar Ngedön Chökhor Ling, the peaceful location in a land of herbs, known as Mirik, in the Darjeeling district, on December 13, 1984, the twentieth day of the tenth month of the water mouse year during the conjunction of Jupiter and Puṣhyā, fire and wind. May virtue increase.

Appendix III

Götsangpa's Table of the Four Yogas

The four yogas	Whether the essence is seen or not	Whether mastery is attained or not	Whether the excellent qualities arise or not	The correspondence to the five paths and ten bhūmis
One-Pointedness	When one knows how to meditate, the essence [of this level] is seen. Manifest thoughts cease and nonconceptuality [develops].	When [this practice can be] sustained for a long time, [mastery] develops. When mastery is attained, the guru is seen to be the buddha.	When [this practice has been sustained for only] a short time, there is nothing definite. When the excellent qualities arise, one will turn away from saṃsāra.	This corresponds to the path of accumulation (with the twelve factors, i.e., the three sets of four) and the path of preparation (with the four partial [concordances] with definite differentiation).
Freedom from elaborations	The essence of mind is realized to be without arising or ceasing; when this transcends the conceptual mind, [the essence of this level] is seen.	The attainment of mastery is to give up concerns for what is worldly and to be without jealousy towards others.	When the excellent qualities develop, the first to arise are the supercognitions. On this level the obscuration of mental afflictions is abandoned.	This corresponds to the attainment of the path of seeing (with the seven branches of enlightenment) and the first bhūmi, Very Joyful.
One Taste	When all duality (such as saṃsāra and nirvāṇa) are realized to be one taste, the essence [of this level] is seen.	When mastery is attained, the eight worldly qualities are equalized.	When the excellent qualities arise, infinite auspicious connections manifest.	This corresponds to the attainment of the path of meditation (with the eight branches of the path of noble beings) and nine bhūmis.
Nonmeditation	When, by being free from the effort of being mindful that involves certainty and so forth, dharmatā is brought to the place of exhaustion, [the essence of this level] is seen.	When mastery is attained, apprehending appearances as real is counteracted.	Beginning with intermediate nonmeditation, one is able to display wonderful, undefiled magical powers. The obscuration regarding objects of knowledge is abandoned.	This corresponds to the mastery of the path of completion and the eleventh bhūmi, Completely Radiant.

APPENDIX IV

OUTLINE AND SESSION LISTS

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    2. The meditation on death and impermanence (*'chi ba mi rtag pa bsgom pa*); page 15
    3. The reflection on karmic causes and results (*las rgyu 'bras bsam pa*); page 23
    4. The meditation on the faults of saṃsāra (*'khor ba'i nyes dmigs bsgom pa*); page 31
  B. The Four Uncommon Preliminaries (*thun mong ma yin pa'i gi sngon 'gro bzhi*); page 39
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Glossary I

English-Tibetan Glossary

The entries here provide the reader with definitions of most of the technical terms and Tibetan found in the translation. Definitions are based whenever possible on the commentaries of Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche (KTGR) and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche (DPR). Other definitions have been taken from *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* (ODM) itself or derived from other major texts, such as Gampopa's *Ornament of Liberation* (*Dvags po thar rgyan*), the *Highest Continuum* (San. *Uttaratantra;* Tib. *rGyud bla ma*), and the *Treasury of Oral Instructions* (*gDams ngag mdzod*), and are so noted. Still others are based on dictionary entries found in the *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology* by Tsepak Rigzin and the *Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary* (*Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, abbreviated as GTD).

The definitions given here are relevant to this text and do not pretend to be exhaustive or universal. Nor do they necessarily cover all the ways a particular term has been translated; and for that, the reader should refer to the Tibetan-English Glossary.

Note that in some cases alternative translations are introduced by the words "also translated as." These indicate how other translators have approached some of these terms, and do not refer to usages in this text.

Abhidharma (*chos mngon pa*): The collection of teachings concerned with the analysis of phenomena; they develop the training of higher knowledge (*lhag pa shes rab kyi bslab pa*).

Abiding nature (*gnas lugs*): The basic or true nature of mind. Syn-

onymous with "the way things are" (*gnas tshul*). Also translated as "true nature of mind," "natural state," or "abiding mode."

Acquired ignorance (*kun brtags pa'i ma rig pa*): The ignorance of the way things truly exist that is based on wrong views or incorrect philosophical systems. (GTD) *See also* Connate ignorance

Akanishtha (*'og min*; Not Low): The highest buddha realm, whose full name is the Heavily Adorned Not Low Pure Realm (*'og min stug po dkod pa'i shing*). It is also the name of the highest of the seventeen levels of the form gods.

All-basis (San. *ālaya*; Tib. *kun gzhi*): The mind-stream. When this is not recognized, it is called all-basis consciousness. When it is recognized, it is called all-basis wisdom or connate wisdom.

All-basis consciousness (San. *ālayavijñāna*; Tib. *kun gzhi'i rnam shes*): The eighth consciousness according to the Yogachāra system. It is the neutral, nonconceptual mind that is the support for the seeds of karmic habitual tendencies.

Appearances (*snang ba*): The objects of the six senses. Also translated as "experiences" or "perceptions."

Appearances during postmeditation (*rjes snang*): The experience of external appearances that arise during postmeditation, as opposed to the mental state of postmeditation. *See also* Mind during postmeditation

Apprehension of characteristics (*mtshan 'dzin*): To take things to have truly existent characteristics or qualities. This involves a subtle fixation or notion of existence. (DPR)

Arhat (*dgra bcom pa*; foe destroyer): Shrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who have attained nirvāṇa or liberation from saṃsāra. *See also* Nirvāṇa and Liberation

Ashvaghoṣha (*rTa dbyangs*): Also known as Āchārya Shura (*sLob dpon dpa' bo*). Indian master, a student of Nāgārjuna.

Avadhūti (*dbu ma*): The central nāḍī or channel. *See also* Nāḍī, prāṇa, and bindu

Avalokiteshvara (*sPyan ras gzigs*): Bodhisattva of compassion.

Awakening (San. *bodhi*; Tib. *byang chub*): The state of a buddha. Also translated as "enlightenment."

Āyatanas (*skye mched*; sense-fields): Twelve sources of perception: the six sense objects and the six sense faculties.

Barawa Gyaltsen Palzang (*'Ba' ra ba rgyal mtshan dpal bzang*): Drukpa Kagyü master, a student of Zhurpukpa and Shukse Ripa. (1310-1392)

Bardo (*bar do*; intermediate state): Generally refers to the state following death and before the next birth.

Basis of designation (*gdags gzhi*; *gdags sa*): The basis for the imputation of a name or term.

Bernakchen and consort (*nag po can lcam dral*): The main dharma protectors of the Karma Kagyü.

Bhagavat (*bcom ldan 'das*; transcendent conqueror): An epithet for the Buddha or buddhas.

Bhikṣhu (*dge slong*): Fully ordained monk.

Bhūmi of beginners (*las dang po'i sa*): The three levels (lesser, intermediate, and greater) of the path of accumulation. (*Ornament of Liberation*) *See also* Path of accumulation

Bhūmi that is the end of the continuum (*rgyun mtha'i sa*): The end of the continuum of the tenth bhūmi.

Bhūmis (*sa*; grounds): The ten stages of the Mahāyāna path.

Billion-world system (*stong gsum*): One billion world systems, each composed of Mt. Meru and the four continents, as taught in the traditional Buddhist cosmology of the abhidharma literature.

Bodhichitta (*byang chub kyi sems*; awakened mind): Generally, the term is used to mean the intention to attain complete buddhahood in order to benefit all beings. Specifically, it is classified as ultimate and relative bodhichitta; the latter being divided into aspirational and engaged bodhichitta.

Bodhisattva (*byang chub sems dpa'*): Practitioner of the Mahāyāna path who has vowed to attain complete awakening in order to liberate all beings from saṃsāra.

Bodhisattva position (*sems dpa' skyil krung*): The cross-legged position where both legs are flat on the mat with the right outside of the left.

Cha (*Chva*): The creator god of the Bön tradition, the early shamanistic religion of Tibet. (DPR)

Chakravartin (*'khor los sgyur pa'i rgyal po*): Universal monarch.

Chaṇḍālī (*gtum mo*; fierce woman): Generally, refers to the inner heat generated through specific meditation techniques.

Chandragomin: Indian master, student of Sthiramati. (7th century)

Chandrakīrti (*Zla ba grags pa*): Indian master, one of the main students of Nāgārjuna.

Child luminosity (*bu'i 'od gsal*): Path luminosity (*lam gyi od gsal*) or the luminosity of meditation (*bsgoms pa'i od gsal*).

Chittamātra (*sems tsam pa*; Mind Only): Mahāyāna philosophical school that asserts that appearances are only mind.

Clarity-emptiness, free from fixation (*gsal stong 'dzin med*): In this experience of clarity and emptiness, there is no sense of labeling clarity as "clarity" or emptiness as "emptiness." (DPR)

Complete-in-the-moment-of-recollection (*skad cig dran rdzogs*): A process of generating a yidam in meditation where the entire form of the yidam appears clearly to mind in an instant.

Completely Fearless (*'Jigs pa thams cad dang 'bral ba*): *See* Names of the four tathāgatas.

Completion-stage meditation (San. *sampannakrama*; Tib. *rdzogs rim*): One of the two stages of meditation in the Vajrayāna path of method (*thabs lam*). There are two types: with characteristics (*mtshan bcas*) and without characteristics (*mtshan med*). The first include the yogas of nāḍī, prāṇa, and bindu; the latter is the practice of mahāmudrā. *See also* Generation-stage meditation.

Concentration (*bsam gtan*): *See* Seventeen levels of the form realm

Conceptual identification (*ngos bzung*): *See* Without conceptual identification

Connate (*lhan cig skyes pa*). Also translated as "coemergent" or "innate."

Connate ignorance (*lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa*): The innate ignorance or conception of a truly existing self that is common naturally to all sentient beings. (GTD)

Controlling Others' Emanations (*gzhan 'phrul dbang byed*): The highest of the six levels of gods in the desire realm.

Counteractive meditation (*zlog sgom*): A meditation that counteracts the usual way one thinks, e.g., taking and sending meditation (*gtong len*), which counteracts the usual mode of self-concern. (KTGR) *See also* Taking and sending meditation

Crowd-pleasing instructions of charlatans (*gzhan zog po'i 'ur khrid*): Instructions that do not correspond to the meaning. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*) Faddish instructions that are popular but involve a lot of personal interpretation that is not based on scriptures or tradition. (DPR)

Cut through a basis or root of mind (*rang gi sems de gzhi rtsa gcod pa*): "Basis" means a support, as a table supports a glass. "Root" refers to an origin, as a seed is the origin of a sprout. "To cut through a basis or root of mind" means to recognize that there is no truly existing basis or root of mind that can be discovered. Or, to put it another way, it means to realize that the true nature of mind is free from any conceptual elaborations. (KTGR) To cut through the root of your own mind means both to cut through the ground and root of the deluded mind, which is the apprehension of a truly existent self (*bdag 'dzin*), and to get to the actual ground and root of mind, which is its abiding nature. (DPR)

Ḍākas and ḍākinīs (*dpa' bo dang mkha' 'gro ma*): Wisdom beings and worldly beings committed to aiding practitioners and the dharma. They are called "the root of activity" (*'phrin las kyi rtsa ba*).

Dakpo Rinpoche (*Dvags po rin po che*): *See* Gampopa

Defeat (*pham pa*): The most serious infraction of the vows of individual liberation. There are four "defeats," one for each of the four root vows. They are called "defeats" because committing such an action "defeats" or breaks the ordination completely.

Definite goodness (*nges legs*): States of lasting happiness, in other words, the states of liberation (*thar pa*) and omniscience (*thams cad mkhyen pa*). (GTD)

Definitive meaning (San. *nītārtha*; Tib. *nges don*): Teachings on the ultimate truth, which do not require interpretation. *See also* Provisional meaning

Denigration (*skur 'debs*): To deny the existence of something that does exist conventionally. *See also* Superimposition

Dependent-arisings; dependent origination; interdependent connections; auspicious connections (*rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba*): The interconnectedness of all things; the fact that they arise in dependence on causes and conditions.

Desire realm (*'dod khams*): One of the three realms of saṃsāra. It comprises six classes of beings: hell-beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, demigods, and the desire realm gods. *See also* Seventeen levels of the form realm and Four spheres of the formless realm

Dharma protectors and guardians (*chos skyong srung ma*): Wisdom beings and worldly beings committed to helping practitioners and protect the dharma.

Dharmadhātu (*chos dbyings*): The ultimate, primordial expanse of the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, which is nonarising and unceasing, unconditioned and unchanging.

Dharmakāya (*chos sku*): The dharmakāya is the realization of the essence of vipashyanā or the result of perfecting the nature of nonconceptuality. It is the fruition achieved for one's own benefit. It is also said that it is the nonarising of the mind-itself and is free from all conceptual elaborations. (ODM)

Dharmakāya endowed with twofold purity (*dag pa gnyis ldan gyi chos sku*): Fruitional dharmakāya possessing the two aspects: the ground aspect of the naturally pure dharmakāya (*rang bzhin rnam dag gi chos sku*) and the dharmakāya purified of adventitious stains (*glo bur gyi dri ma dag pa'i chos sku*).

Dharmatā (*chos nyid*; reality): The ultimate nature or reality of mind and phenomena. Synonymous with emptiness.

Dharmamudrā (*chos kyi phyag rgya*): The yoga that is the mudrā of the scriptural dharma. (GTD)

Direct instructions of great meditators (*sgom chen gyi smar khrid*): Instructions given by those who have practiced the essential points for body, mind, and visualizations, who have definitely meditated on the experiences corresponding to their level of attainment. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*)

Disorder of the life-force prāṇa (*srog 'dzin gyi rlung log pa*): The life-force prāṇa is one of the five root prāṇas and is the support for the all-basis consciousness. A disorder of the life-force prāṇa occurs when this prāṇa does not flow properly through the nāḍīs, resulting in various mental and physical illnesses. *See also* Nāḍīs, prāṇas, and bindus

Ḍombīpa: Also known as Ḍombī Heruka. Indian mahāsiddha, student of Virūpa.

Downwards-expelling prāṇa (*thur sel gyi rlung*): One of the five root prāṇas as described in the Vajrayāna teachings. Its function is to retain and expel urine and feces. *See also* Nāḍīs, prāṇas, and bindus

Düsum Khyenpa (*Dus gsum mkhyen pa*): First Gyalwang Karmapa, one of the foremost students of Gampopa, and founder of the Karma Kagyü. (1110–1193)

Earth-lord demons (*gdon sa bdag*): Nonhumans who are said to influence local areas.

Earth-pressing and meditative-equipoise mudrās (*sa gnon dang mnyam gzhag gi phyag rgya*): In the earth-pressing mudrā, the right hand is placed palm down on the right knee. In the mudrā of meditative equipoise, the left hand is placed palm up in the lap.

Eight close sons (*nye ba'i sras brgyad*): Mañjushrī, Vajrapāṇi, Avalokiteshvara, Kṣhitigarbha, Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣhkambhin, Ākāshagarbha, Maitreya, and Samantabhadra.

Eight worldly qualities (*'jig rten chos rgyad*): To feel happy over slight advantages or sadness over disadvantages arising from: personal gain or the lack of it (*rnyed pa dang ma rnyed pa*), hearing pleasant words or not hearing them (*snyan pa dang mi snyad pa*), being praised or denigrated (*stod pa dang smad pa*), and experiencing happiness or unhappiness (*bde ba dang mi bde ba*). (GTD)

Eightfold path of noble beings (*'phags lam yan lag brgyad*): (1) Correct views (*yang dag pa'i lta ba*); (2) correct thought (*yang dag pa'i rtog pa*); (3) correct speech (*yang dag pa'i ngag*); (4) correct effort (*yang dag pa'i rtsol ba*); (5) correct livelihood (*yang dag pa'i 'tsho ba*); (6) correct mindfulness (*yang dag pa'i dran pa*); (7) correct samādhi (*yang dag pa'i ting nge 'dzin*); and (8) correct goals of

actions (*yang dag pa'i las kyi mtha'*).

Eighty excellent minor marks (*dpe byad bzang po brgyad cu*): The signs of physical excellence that adorn a perfect buddha.

Elaborations; conceptual elaborations (*sprod pa*): The conceptual constructs that are falsely imputed to phenomena. Generally, there are four elaborations, which are the four extremes: existence, non-existence, both, or neither.

Elevated states (*mngon mtho*): The classes of gods and humans; those who experience happiness.

Eleventh bhūmi (*sa bcu gcig*): In the Mahāyāna system of ten bhūmis, the eleventh bhūmi, Completely Radiant (*kun tu 'od*), is complete buddhahood.

Emptiness endowed with the supreme of all aspects (*rnam kun mchog ldan gyi stong pa nyid*): This term signifies that emptiness is inseparable from appearances, inseparable from bliss, or inseparable from empty-forms (*stong gzugs*). "Aspects" refers to the arising of empty-forms as the display of bliss-emptiness. They are empty-forms in that they are illusory, not truly existent. Emptiness is not simply the refutation of the existence of atoms or matter, it is inseparable from the supreme of all aspects: empty-forms. (KTGR)

"Aspects" refers to the aspect of clarity or manifestation. "Supreme" refers to the fact that this emptiness is not simply the refutation of the true existence of physical matter. The term is used mostly in the Shentong-madhyamaka teachings to express the inseparability of appearances and emptiness. (DPR)

Excellent qualities of relinquishment and realization (*spangs rtogs kyi yon tan*): The two superior qualities of buddhas, which are the abandonment of the two obscurations and the realization of twofold knowledge, respectively. *See also* Two obscurations and Twofold knowledge

Experiential instructions of yogins or yoginīs (*rnal 'byor pa'i myon khrid*): Instructions that guide students according to what has developed in their mind-streams as beings of higher, lower, or intermediate capacities and according to the guru's experiences and realizations. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*)

Expressive power (*rtsal*): The manifesting quality of mind. Also translated as "display" or "manifestation."

Fearlessnesses (*mi 'jigs pa*): Four excellent qualities of a buddha included within the qualities of separation. Fearlessness regarding (1) realization, (2) relinquishment, (3) teaching the dharma to overcome obstacles, and (4) teaching the path of renunciation. (GTD)

Figuratively concordant precepts, three (*cha mthun gyi bslab bya gsum*): (1) To respect images of the buddhas, no matter how small, which are representations of the buddhas; (2) to respect the words of the dharma, which are representations of the dharma; and (3) to respect the Buddhist robes, which are representations of the saṅgha. (*Ornament of Liberation*)

Five acts of immediate consequence (*tshams med lnga*): (1) Patricide; (2) matricide; (3) to kill an arhat; (4) to cause divisions among the saṅgha; and (5) to draw the blood of the Buddha with malicious intent.

Five elements (*'byung ba lnga*): Earth (*sa*), water (*chu*), fire (*me*), wind (*rlung*), space (*nam mkha'*).

Five jewels (*dkon mchog lnga*): Gurus (*bla ma*), yidams (*yi dam*), buddhas (*sang rgyas*), dharma (*chos*), and saṅgha (*dge 'dun*).

Five nails (*gser lnga*): The five nails of Nāropa are: (1) The nail of taking illness as an enhancement; (2) the nail of using death as an aid; (3) the nail of taking mental afflictions as the path; (4) the nail of liberating signs and thoughts in their own place; and (5) the nail of taking obstacles as siddhis. (*Ornament to the Essence of Amṛita, bDud rtsi snying khu yi zur rgyan*, by Khenpo Karma Ratna)

Five paths (*lam lnga*): Path of accumulation (*tshogs lam*); path of preparation (*sbyor lam*); path of seeing (*mthong lam*); path of meditation (*sgom lam*); and path of completion (*mthar phyin pa'i lam*).

Five phases of complete awakening (*mngon byang lnga*): A five-step process of generating a yidam in meditation: (1) the ground of emptiness, (2) the seat, (3) the seed syllable, (4) the symbolic attribute (*phyag mtshan*) marked with the seed syllable, and (5) the complete form of the deity. (DPR) Other sources describe the first two stages of this five-step process as (1) the moon seat and (2) the

sun seat. (GTD; Tsepak Rigzin) Also translated as "five phases of purification and perfection" and "five aspects of true enlightenment."

Five poisons (*dug lnga*): The five poisonous mental afflictions: desire (*'dod chags*), aggression (*zhe sdang*), ignorance (*gti mug*), pride (*nga rgyal*), and jealousy (*phrag dog*).

Five secondary acts of immediate consequence (*nye ba lnga; nyer ba'i mtshams med lnga*): (1) To engage in sexual conduct with a female arhat; (2) to kill a bodhisattva knowingly; (3) to kill a saṅgha member who is in training; (4) to misappropriate the saṅgha's property; and (5) to destroy a stūpa.

Five sense pleasures (*'dod yon lnga*): Beautiful forms, pleasant sounds, fragrant scents, delicious tastes, and soft tangible objects.

Five senses (*dbang po sgo lnga*): Eye (*mig*), ear (*rna*), nose (*sna*), tongue (*lce*), and body (*lus*).

Five skandhas (*phung po lnga*; five aggregates): Forms (*gzugs*); feelings (*tshor ba*); discriminations (*'du shes*); formations (*'du byed*); and consciousnesses (*rnam shes*).

Five streams of being (*lam rgyud lnga*): The states of gods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell-beings.

Five supercognitions (*mngon par shes pa lnga*): (1) Magical powers (*rdzu 'phrul*); (2) divine eye (*lha'i mig*); (3) divine ear (*lha'i rna*); (4) recollection of previous lives (*sngon gnas rjes dran*); and (5) knowledge of others' minds (*gzhan sems shes pa*). (GTD)

Five wisdoms (*ye shes lnga*): (1) Mirrorlike wisdom (*me long lta bu'i ye shes*); (2) discriminating wisdom (*sor rtogs ye shes*); (3) wisdom of equality (*mnyam nyid ye shes*); (4) the wisdom that accomplishes activities (*bya grub ye shes*); and (5) the wisdom of the dharmadhātu (*chos dbyings ye shes*).

Form realm (*gzugs khams*): *See* Seventeen levels of the form realm

Formless realm: (*gzugs med khams*): *See* Four spheres of the formless realm

Four classes of tantras (*rgyud sde bzhi*): (1) Kriyā tantra (*bya ba'i rgyud*, action tantra), (2) charyā tantra (*spyod pa'i rgyud*, performance tantra), (3) yoga tantra (*rnal 'byor rgyud*), and (4) anuttarayoga (*rnal 'byor bla na med pa'i rgyud*, highest yoga tantra).

Four concentrations (*bsam gtan bzhi*): *See* Seventeen levels of the form realm

Four elements (*'byung ba bzhi*): Earth (*sa*), water (*chu*), fire (*me*), and wind (*rlung*).

Four empowerments (San. *abhiṣheka*; Tib. *dbang*): (1) Vase (*bum pa*); (2) secret (*gsang*); (3) knowledge-wisdom (*shes rab ye shes*); and (4) word or fourth (*tshig; dbang bzhi pa*).

Four ends (*mtha' bzhi*): The end of all acquisition is dispersal; the end of building is collapse; the end of meeting is parting; and the end of life is death.

Four Great Royal Lineages (*rgyal chen rigs bzhi*): The lowest of the six levels of gods in the desire realm.

Four immeasurables (*tshad med bzhi*): Love (*byams pa*), compassion (*snying rje*), joy (*dga' ba*), and equanimity (*btang snyoms*).

Four individual correct knowledges (*so so yang dag par rig pa bzhi*): Four ways a bodhisattva knows unerringly the characteristics of phenomena. A correct knowledge (1) of phenomena (*chos*), (2) of meanings (*don*), (3) of terms (*nges pa'i tshig*), and (4) concerning confidence (*spobs pa*). (GTD)

Four joys (*dga' ba bzhi*): Joy (*dga' ba*), supreme joy (*mchog dga'*), special joy (*khyad dga'*), and connate joy (*lhan skyes kyi dga' ba*).

Four kāyas (*sku bzhi*): Dharmakāya (*chos sku*), sambhogakāya (*longs sku*), nirmāṇakāya (*sprul sku*), and svabhāvakāya (*ngo bo nyid sku*). *See also* respective entries

Four kinds of activity (*phrin las rnam pa bzhi*): Pacifying (*zhi ba*), enriching (*rgyas pa*), magnetizing (*dbang ba*), and subduing (*drag po*).

Four modes of birth (*skye gnas rnam pa bzhi*): (1) Womb (*mngal skyes*); (2) egg (*sgong skyes*); (3) heat and moisture (*drod gsher las skyes ba*); and (4) instantaneous (*rdzus skyes*).

Four negative qualities (*nag po'i chos bzhi*): (1) To deceive gurus and those worthy of receiving offerings; (2) to cause others to regret things that should not be regretted; (3) to speak improperly to bodhisattvas; and (4) to deceive sentient beings. (*Ornament of Liberation*)

Four obscurations (*sgrib pa bzhi*): There are different enumerations of these. One version is: the obscurations (1) of mental afflictions (*nyon sgrib*); (2) regarding objects of knowledge (*shes sgrib*); (3) of attachments (*chags sgrib*); and (4) of impediments (*thogs sgrib*). Another is: the obscurations (1) of karma (*las kyi sgrib pa*); (2) of mental afflictions (*nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa*); (3) regarding objects of knowledge (*shes bya'i sgrib pa*); and (4) to meditative absorption (*snyoms 'jug gi sgrib pa*). (GTD and Tsepak Rigzin)

Four partial concordances with definite differentiation (*nges 'byed cha mthun bzhi*): The four stages of the path of preparation: heat (*drod*), peak (*rtse*), forbearance (*bzod pa*), and supreme mundane qualities (*chos mchog*).

Four positive qualities (*dkar po'i chos bzhi*): (1) Never to tell lies knowingly; (2) to establish all sentient beings in what is virtuous, particularly the virtue of the Mahāyāna; (3) to consider all bodhisattvas as being buddhas and to proclaim their excellent qualities; and (4) not to deceive sentient beings and to maintain one's altruistic intention. (*Ornament of Liberation*)

Four spheres of the formless realm (*gzugs med skye mched mu bzhi*): (1) The sphere of Limitless Space (*nam mkha' mtha' yas skye mched*); (2) the sphere of Limitless Consciousness (*rnam shes mtha' yas skye mched*); (3) the sphere of Nothingness (*ci yang med pa'i mtha' yas skye mched*); and (4) the sphere of Neither Discrimination nor Nondiscrimination (*'du shes med min gyi skye mched*).

Four types of daily activities (*spyod pa rnam pa bzhi; spyod lam bzhi*): Various lists are given: Eating (*za*), sleeping (*nyal*), walking (*'gro*), and sitting (*'dug*). (KTGR) Walking (*'gro*), sleeping (*nyal*), standing (*'dug*), and sitting (*sdud*). (Pakmo Drupa) Walking (*'gro*), sitting (*'dug*), sleeping (*nyal*), and moving (*'chag*). (GTD)

Four types of neutral karma without obscuration (*ma bsgribs lung ma bsten*): (1) What arises from the maturation [of karma] (*rnam smin skyes*); (2) activities (*spyod lam pa*); (3) arts and crafts (*bzo gnas*); and (4) intentional emanations (*sprul sems*). These are categories of neutral karma without obscuration listed in chapter two of the *Abhidharmakosha*. (2) Activities means what relates to positions: walking, being stationary, sitting, and lying down. (4) Intentional emanations: the mind by which the possessor of supernatural power creates visible things, which is called the fruition of the superknowledges.

Four yogas (*rnal 'byor bzhi*): Four stages presented in the Mahāmudrā system: (1) one-pointedness (*rtse gcig*); (2) freedom from elaborations (*spros bral*); (3) one taste (*ro gcig*); and (4) nonmeditation (*sgom med*).

Free from a root (*rtsa bral*): The mind has nowhere from which it arises, nowhere that it dwells, and nowhere that it dissolves (*byung sa dang gnas sa dang thim sa dang bral*). (ODM) To be without a root means not to have an origin, as a seed is the origin of a plant. (KTGR)

Free from fixation (*'dzin med*): The lack of conceptual fixation, conceptual apprehension, or labeling of experiences or objects. Conceptual fixation or apprehension (*'dzin pa*) is to conceptually mix the name of an object and the referent for that name. Synonymous with "lack of clinging," "no reference point," or "no conceptual identification." (KTGR)

Gampopa (*sGam po pa*): Also known as Dakpo Rinpoche (*Dvags po rin po che*). Foremost student of Milarepa, he also studied with Kadampa teachers. His main disciples include Düsum Khyenpa and Pakmo Drupa. (1079–1153)

Gaṇachakra (*tshogs*; feast): Feast practice that is part of Vajrayāna sādhanas.

Garuḍa (*mkha' lding*): Mythological birds said to hatch fully formed from their eggs.

Gathering of the dhātu (*khams 'dus*): The dhātu (i.e., bindu) gathers in particular nāḍīs in ways that cause mental imbalances often characterized by depression.

General precepts, three (*spyi'i bslab bya*): (1) Always to make offerings to the three jewels; (2) never to forsake the three jewels; and (3) always to recall the excellent qualities of the three jewels. (*Ornament of Liberation*)

Generation-stage meditation (San. *utpattikrama*; Tib. *bskyed rim*): One of the two stages of meditation of the Vajrayāna path of method (*thabs lam*). It employs visualizations of yidams and the recitation of their mantras. *See also* Completion-stage meditation

Object generality (*don spyi*): An image of an object appearing to the conceptual mind, as opposed to an instance of the actual object. Defined as "a superimposition that exists merely as an appearance for a thought" (*rtog pa'i snang ngor tsam du grub pa'i sgro btags kyi cha*). Also translated as "mental image" or "meaning-generality."

Glorious knot (San. *shrīvasta*; Tib. *dpal be'u*): Also translated as "endless knot" or "knot of eternity."

Gönpo Drikungpa (*mGon po 'bri khung pa*): *See* Jikten Sumgön Dorje

Gönpo Yeshe (*mGon po ye shes*): Kagyü master, student of Yakde Panchen.

Götsangpa (*rGod tshang pa*): His name means "He of the Vulture's Nest," referring to the place where he spent many years in meditation retreat. Student of Tsangpa Gyare and founder of the upper Drukpa Kagyü. (1189–1258)

Great emptiness (*stong chen po*): The inseparability of appearances and emptiness, or the inseparability of clarity and emptiness. (KTGR)

Gyalwa Yang Gönpa (*rGyal ba yang dgon pa*): Student of Götsangpa and master in the Drukpa Kagyü tradition. (1213–1258)

Habitual tendencies (*bag chags*): The propensities created by the mind's habituations, which are stored in a latent form in the all-basis consciousness. (GTD)

Hair-tuft (San. *ūrṇā*; Tib. *mdzod spu*): The swirl of hair between the eyebrows of a buddha.

Happy states (*bde 'gro*): *See* Higher states

Higher abhidharma (*mngon pa gong ma*): The abhidharma teachings based on the *Compendium of Abhidharma* by Asaṅga.

Higher states (*mtho ris*): The states of gods, demigods, and humans.

Hīnayāna (*theg pa dman pa*; Lesser Vehicle): Includes the first two yānas, the Shrāvakayāna and Pratyekabuddhayāna, whose fruition is individual liberation.

Infinite Supreme Body (*sKu 'byams klas*): *See* Names of the four tathāgatas

Intrinsic state (*gnyug ma*): A term for the true nature of mind. The uncontrived, natural state, also known as "ordinary mind" or the wisdom of self-arisen awareness. (KTGR)

Īshvara (*dBang phyug*): Another name for the Hindu god Shiva.

Isolate quality (*ldog chos*): A technical term meaning a phenomenon that is not a functioning thing and that appears to a conceptual consciousness as a quality of a substance (*rtog pa la rdzas yon tan du snang ba'i chos gang zhig dngos po ma yin pa*). (*Miraculous Key* by KTGR)

Jambudvīpa (*'dzam bu gling*): The southern continent of the four continent world-system.

Jikten Sumgön Dorje (*'Jig rten gsum mgon rdo rje*): Also known as Kyobpa Drikungpa (*sKyob pa 'bri gung pa*) and Gönpo Drikungpa (*mGon po 'bri khung pa*). One of the main students of Pakmo Drupa and founder of the Drikung Kagyü. (1143–1217)

Kadampa (*bka' gdams pa*): The tradition brought to Tibet by Atīsha, which emphasizes the vinaya and gradual path (*lam rim*). Gampopa studied with Kadampa teachers prior to becoming a student of Milarepa.

Karmamudrā (*las kyi phyag rgya*): The completion-stage practice involving practice with a consort.

Karmic continuity (*las 'phro can*): *See* Possess the continuity of training

Khachöpa (*mKha' spyod pa*): Also known as Khachö Wangpo (*mKha' spyod dbang po*). The second Shamarpa, the student of Rölpe Dorje, the fourth Gyalwang Karmapa. (1350–1405)

King-demons (*don rgyal po*): Demons whose main energy is aggression. Although they are usually harmful, they can be helpful at times. (DPR)

Kiṃnaras (*mi'am ci*; probable-humans): Celestial musicians with a human body and a horse's head, or vice versa.

Knowledge (San. *prajñā*; Tib. *shes rab*): The intelligence or understanding that is developed on the path and is the means for bringing out ground wisdom. Also translated as "wisdom."

Knowledge of the mode of phenomena (*ji lta ba mkhyen pa*): A

buddha's complete knowledge of the ultimate.

Knowledge that knows the varieties of phenomena (*ji snyed mkhyen pa'i shes rab*): A buddha's complete knowledge of relative phenomena.

Kusāli (Tib. *dge ba can*; virtuous one): In Tibetan it has the sense of a hidden yogi (*bed pa'i rnal byor pa*) who may appear like a beggar. (Āchārya Tenpa Gyaltsen Negi)

Kyobpa Drikungpa (*sKyob pa 'bri gung pa*): *See* Jikten Sumgön Dorje

Liberation (*thar pa*): The state of freedom from suffering attained in the Shrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha yānas, not the full awakening of a buddha attained through the Mahāyāna.

Lineage of practice [based on] blessings (*nyams len byin rlabs kyi rgyud*): According to the Lam-rim tradition of Je Tsong Khapa this originates from the Buddha and was passed to Mañjushrī to Shāntideva and so on. In the tantric tradition, particularly the Kagyü tradition, this begins with the Buddha Vajradhara and was passed to Tilopa, Nāropa, Ḍombīpa, Atīsha, and so on. (Tsepak Rigzin)

Lineage of the profound view (*zab mo lta ba'i rgyud*): Lineage of teachings and practices coming from Mañjushrī, Nāgārjuna, and Chandrakīrti that emphasizes knowledge.

Lineage of vast conduct (*rgya chen spyod pa'i rgyud*): Lineage of teachings and practices coming from Maitreya, Asaṅga, and Vasubhandu that emphasizes method.

Ling-je Repa (*gLing rje ras pa*): One of the main students of Pakmo Drupa and founder of the Drukpa Kagyü. (1128–1188)

Lorepa (*Lo ras pa*): Drukpa Kagyü master, student of Tsangpa Gyare, and founder of the lower Drukpa Kagyü. (1187–1250)

Lower abhidharma (*mngon pa 'og ma*): The abhidharma teachings based on the *Treasury of Abhidharma* by Vasubhandu.

Lower states (*ngan 'gro; ngan song*): The three lower states of the hell-beings, hungry ghosts, and animals.

Luminosity of death (*shi ba'i 'od gsal*): The abiding nature of mind revealed at the moment of death. Also referred to as mother luminosity (*ma'i od gsal*) or ground luminosity (*gzhi'i 'od gsal*).

Lying about one's attainments (*mi chos bla ma'i rdzun*): The most serious type of lie that breaks the vow of not lying. It is knowingly and falsely claiming to have attained qualities that are higher (*bla ma*) than the normal human qualities (*mi chos*).

Mahāsattva (*sems dpa' chen po*; great being): An epithet for great bodhisattvas.

Mahāyāna (*theg pa chen po*; Greater Vehicle): The bodhisattva vehicle whose fruition is complete awakening. Includes the Pāramitāyāna, based on the sūtra teachings, and the Vajrayāna, or Secret Mantra, based on the tantras. *See also* respective entries

Maitreya (*Byams pa*): The bodhisattva now residing in the Tuṣhita god realm who will be the fifth buddha of this aeon.

Maitrīpa: Indian mahāsiddha and teacher of Marpa Lotsāwa. (1012–1097)

MAṆI mantra: The mantra of Avalokiteshvara, OṂ MAṆI PADME HŪṂ, commonly recited by Tibetans.

Manifestations (*'char sgo*): The manifestations or experiences of mind: thoughts and appearances. (DPR)

Māras (*bdud*): Beings who harm others and create obstacles for practitioners. There are said to be four types of māras, but ultimately all māras are one's own mind.

Meditation belt (*sgom thag*): A cloth strap used as a support for the meditation posture.

Mental afflictions (San. *kleshas*; Tib. *nyon mongs*): The negative, deluded states of mind that afflict sentient beings. The six root afflictions are ignorance (*ma rig pa*), desire (*'dod chags*), anger (*khong 'khro*), pride (*nga rgyal*), doubt (*the tshom*), and wrong views (*lta ba*).

Mere emptiness; emptiness alone (*stong rkyang*): An emptiness that is a mere nothingness; not the emptiness that is inseparable from clarity or appearances. (KTGR)

Mikyö Dorje (*Mi bskyod rdo rje*): The eighth Gyalwang Karmapa, a renowned scholar and meditation master, student of Sangye Nyenpa. (1507–1554)

Milarepa (*Mi la ras pa*): One of the foremost students of Marpa Lotsāwa and teacher of Gampopa. (1040–1123)

Mind during postmeditation; mental state during postmeditation (*rjes shes*): The mental experiences during postmeditation, as opposed to the experiences of appearances. *See also* Appearances during postmeditation

Mind instructions of realized beings (*rtogs ldan gyi dgongs khrid*): Instructions given to the bypassing and instantaneous types based on an awareness of the level of development of their mind-streams. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*)

Mind-itself (*sems nyid*): In the Mahāmudrā teachings, "mind-itself" is distinguished from "mind" (*sems*). Generally, "mind-itself" means the true nature of mind, ultimate dharmatā, whereas "mind" refers to the relative, deluded mind. (KTGR)

Most Torturous (*mnar med*): The lowest level of the hells, thus the lowest state of existence in the three realms.

Mother luminosity (*ma'i 'od gsal*): Ground luminosity, the basic nature of mind. (*gzhi'i 'od gsal*).

Mother sentient beings (*ma rgan sems can*): A term used as a reminder that all sentient beings have been one's mother at one time in the cycle of existence.

Nāḍīs, prāṇas, and bindus (*rtsa rlung thig le*): Nāḍīs are channels through which the prāṇas, or winds, move. The prāṇas carry the bindus. (KTGR)

Nāga (*klu*): Class of beings with human torsos and serpentlike lower bodies who dwell in and near water. (GTD)

Nāgārjuna (*kLu sgrub*): Indian master of Madhyamaka philosophy.

Names of the four tathāgatas (*de bzhin gshegs pa bzhi'i mtshan*): Many Jewels (*Rin chen mang*) is Shākyamuni. Truly Beautiful Form (*gZugs mdzes dam pa*) is the noble Avalokiteshvara. Infinite Supreme Body (*sKu mchog 'byams klas*) is Mañjushrī. Completely Fearless (*'Jigs bral*) is Vajrapāṇi. It is also noted that it is possible to consider Many Jewels (*Rin chen mang*) to be Ratnasambhava; that Truly Beautiful Form (*gZugs mdzes*) [means] the one who is pleasing to all who see him; that Infinite Supreme Body (*sKu 'byams klas*) is Hemasāgara (*Gang chen mtsho*); and that Completely Fearless (*'Jigs bral*) is Amoghasiddhi. (*Suchness of Tormas: The Feast of Nectar, gTor ma'i de nyid bdud rtsi'i dga' ston*, by the fifth Shamarpa, Könchok Yenlak)

Nanda, Aṅgulimālā, Ajātashatru, and Udayana: Students of the Buddha renowned for having committed negative acts and, later, through relying on one of the four powers, achieving the state of an arhat, stream-enterer, or bodhisattva. (*Ornament of Liberation*)

Nāropa: Indian mahāsiddha, student of Tilopa and teacher of Marpa Lotsāwa. (1016–1100)

Natural forms (*rang gzugs*): A term that signifies that forms are of the nature of mind, like appearances in a dream. Synonymous with "reflexive expressive power" (*rang rtsal*) and "reflexive appearances" (*rang snang*). (KTGR)

Neutral (*lung ma bstan*): An action or state that is not virtuous and not nonvirtuous. (DPR)

Nirmāṇakāya (*sprul sku*): The form kāya of a buddha that can appear to both impure and pure beings. (GTD) It is the fruition that is achieved for the benefit of other sentient beings. It is also said that the mind, though free from arising and ceasing, manifests in various ways, or that it is the unceasing appearances of the expressive power of mind. (ODM)

Nirvāṇa (*mya ngan las 'das pa; 'das*; pass beyond suffering): Can either mean the liberation (*thar pa*) from suffering achieved through the Shrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna, or the state of omniscience (*thams cad mkhyen pa*), complete awakening, achieved through the Mahāyāna.

Noble beings (San. *ārya*; Tib. *'phags pa*): An epithet for arhats, bodhisattvas residing on the bhūmis, and buddhas.

Nonarising; unborn (*skye ba med pa*): A synonym for emptiness. It means that, ultimately, nothing has any true arising or birth, although on a relative level there appears to be arising or birth.

Nonthing (*dngos med*): Defined as that which does not perform a function (*don byed nus pas stong pa*), e.g., space. *See also* Thing

Obscuration regarding objects of knowledge (*shes bya'i sgrib pa*): Not knowing the abiding nature of objects of knowledge, which impedes the attainment of omniscience. (DPR) Also translated as "obstructions to omniscience."

Omniscience (*thams cad mkhyen pa; kun mkhyen*): The state of complete awakening attained through the Mahāyāna.

One with only three ideas (*'du shes gsum pa*): Someone who only eats, sleeps, and defecates. (KTGR)

Opening of Brahmā (San. *brahmarandhra*; Tib. *tshang bug*): The opening at the top of the head.

Ordinary mind (*tha mal gyi shes pa*): The uncontrived, unfabricated intrinsic state of mind. The word "ordinary" is used to indicate that all beings possess this, whether they recognize it or not. This is what is pointed out by a guru. (KTGR)

Orgyenpa (*O rgyan pa*): Student of the second Gyalwang Karmapa, Karma Pakshi, and Götsangpa. He traveled to Uḍḍiyāṇa and received from Vajravārāhī the teachings known as the three vajras of approach and accomplishment (*rdo rje gsum gyi bsnyen sgrub*), which became one of the eight chariots of the practice lineage. (1230–1309)

Ostentatious instructions of the ambitious (*'dod pa che'i dpung khrid*): A presentation by those whose mind-streams have not mixed with the words and the meaning in any way. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*) Teachings that are not based on an understanding of scriptures and reasonings, given by those who are proud and ambitious. (DPR)

Pacification (*zhi byed*): One of the eight practice lineages brought to Tibet by Padampa Sangye.

Pakmo Drupa (*Phag mo gru pa*): One of the main students of Gampopa, founder of the Pakdru Kagyü. His principal students founded the eight lesser Kagyü lineages. (1110–1170)

Pāramitāyāna (*phar phyin theg pa*): The sūtra Mahāyāna system of the gradual path, presented in terms of five paths and ten bhūmis. Also known as the Causal Vehicle (*rgyu'i theg pa*), because it takes the causes for awakening as the path.

Partial emptiness (*nyi tshe ba'i stong nyid*): A partial understanding of emptiness, such as that generated by a nonaffirming negation (which refutes the objection of negation). Or the partial realization of emptiness attained by shrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. It is partial or temporary because there is no realization of the inseparability of appearances and emptiness or the inseparability of emptiness and clarity. (KTGR and DPR)

Particular precepts, three (*bye brag gi bslab bya*): (1) Having taken refuge in the buddhas, not to take refuge in any worldly god; (2) having taken refuge in the dharma, not to harm any sentient beings; and (3) having taken refuge in the saṅgha, not to be influenced by those opposed to the dharma. (*Ornament of Liberation*)

Path of accumulation (*tshogs lam*): First of the five paths. *See also* Twelve factors of the path of accumulation

Path of completion (*mthar phyin lam*): The fifth of the five paths, which is complete awakening. Also known as the path of no more learning (*mi slob pa'i lam*).

Path of meditation (*sgom lam*): Fourth of the five paths, which emphasizes the practice of the eightfold path of noble beings. *See also* Eightfold path of noble beings

Path of preparation (*sbyor lam*): The second of the five paths. It has four stages: heat (*drod*), peak (*rtse*), forbearance (*bzod pa*), and supreme mundane qualities (*chos mchog*). Also translated as "path of union" or "path of joining." *See also* Four partial concordances with definite differentiation

Path of seeing (*mthong lam*): The third of the five paths, on which the seven branches of awakening are cultivated. It is also the attainment of the first bhūmi, Very Joyful. *See also* Seven branches of awakening

Paths of noble beings (*'phags lam*): The three paths achieved by noble bodhisattvas: the path of seeing (*mthong lam*), the path of meditation (*sgom lam*), and the path beyond learning (*mi bslob pa'i lam*).

Perpetuating skandhas (*nyer len gyi phung po*): The defiled skandhas that have arisen from the perpetuation (*nyer len*) of previous karma and mental afflictions, and which will continue to

perpetuate (*nyer len*) karma and mental afflictions in the future. (GTD)

Pinnacle of Existence (*srid rtse*): The highest level of the gods, thus the highest state of existence in the three realms.

Play (*rol pa*): The quality of manifestation. Also translated as "display" or "manifestation."

Piṭakas (*sde snod*; collection): The collections of the Buddha's teachings. *See also* Tripiṭaka

Pointing-out instructions for old women (*rgan mo dzub khrid*): Pointing out—as if by pointing a finger—that experiences or realizations arising in the mind-stream are the three kāyas and the five wisdoms. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*) Pointing-out instructions that do not refer to scriptures or rely upon reasonings. They are a simple, direct transmission, easily understood by those who are not scholars. (DPR)

Possess the continuity of training (*sbyang ba'i 'phro can*): Individuals who, having trained in the dharma in their previous lives, experience the continuation of their merit and meditation experiences in their present lives.

Powers (*stobs*): Ten excellent qualities of a buddha included within the qualities of separation. The powers of (1) knowing what is correct and what is not; (2) knowing the maturation of karma; (3) knowing the various inclinations [of beings]; (4) knowing the various dispositions [of beings]; (5) knowing the various faculties [of beings]; (6) knowing the path that leads everywhere; (7) knowing the meditative concentrations, samādhis, absorptions, and so forth; (8) knowing previous lives; (9) knowing death and rebirth; and (10) knowing the exhaustion of defilements. (GTD)

Prāṇas, upper and lower (*steng rlung 'og rlung*): The upper prāṇa refers to the prāṇa responsible for breathing. The lower prāṇa refers to the downwards-expelling prāṇa. *See also* Downwards-expelling prāṇa and Nāḍīs, prāṇas, and bindus

Pratyekabuddhas (*rang sang rgyas*; solitary realizers): Hīnayāna practitioners who attain nirvāṇa without relying on a teacher and who do not teach.

Provisional meaning (San. *neyārtha*; Tib. *drang don*): Teachings on relative topics that require interpretation and lead students to the definitive meaning or ultimate truth. Also translated as "expedient meaning" or "interpretable meaning." *See also* Definitive Meaning

Rangjung Dorje (*Rang byung rdo rje*): The third Gyalwang Karmapa, student of Orgyenpa. (1284–1339)

Reflexive appearances (*rang snang*): The term points out that the appearances (*snang ba*) of the five sense objects are manifestations of the mind; that is, they are reflexive (*rang*): appearing from the mind to the mind. Also translated as "self-appearances," "personal experience," or "one's own projections."

Reflexive awareness (*rang rig*): Awareness that is aware of itself by itself (*rang gis rang rig pa*); that is, awareness that does not involve any subject-object duality. (KTGR) Also translated as "self-awareness" or "apperception."

Reflexively aware wisdom itself (*so sor rang rig pa'i ye shes*): In the Mahāmudrā tradition (as well in as the Mahāsandhi and Shentong traditions), this term means that wisdom is aware of or knows its own essence. "Itself" (*so sor*) refers to its own essence (i.e., awareness), not the self of the individual. In the Rangtong tradition "itself" refers to individual (*so so*) phenomena: this wisdom is aware of the emptiness of all phenomena individually. (KTGR)

Representations (*rten*): Objects representing the body, speech, and mind of the Buddha; that is, respectively, statues, books, and stūpas.

Ṛiṣhis (*drang srong*; upright ones): Accomplished sages or meditators.

Ritrö Wangchuk (*Ri khrod dbang phyug*; Lord of Hermits): Another name for Shavari, Indian mahāsiddha and teacher of Saraha.

Sakya Paṇḍita (*Sa skya paṇdita*): One of the five Sakya forefathers, famous as a great scholar. (1182–1251)

Samaya (*dam tshig*): Commitments of the Vajrayāna path.

Sambhogakāya (*longs sku*): The form kāya of a buddha adorned with the major and minor marks, which appears only to noble bodhisattvas. (GTD) It is the fruition that is achieved for the benefit

of other sentient beings. It is also said that it is the nonabiding of mind and the mind's awareness and clarity. (ODM)

Saṃsāra (*'khor ba*; cyclic existence): The state of existence, experienced by sentient beings due to their ignorance, in which suffering is the predominate experience.

Saraha: Also known as the Great Brahman. An Indian mahāsiddha and mahāmudrā master.

Secret Mantra (*gsang sngags*): Another name for the Vajrayāna. *See also* Vajrayāna

Settle into itself (*rang babs*): To let the mind settle or fall into itself, into its own nature, in a nondualistic and uncontrived way. (KTGR)

Seven branches of awakening (*byang chub kyi yan lag bdun*): Seven of the thirty-seven factors of awakening. (1) Mindfulness (*dran pa*); (2) knowledge (*shes rab*); (3) diligence (*brtson 'grus*); (4) joy (*dga' ba*); (5) pliancy (*shin sbyangs*); (6) samādhi (*ting nge 'dzin*); and (7) equanimity (*btang snyoms*).

Seven impure bhūmis (*ma dag sa bdun*): The first through seventh bhūmis.

Seven-branch prayer (*yan lag bdun pa*): Verses of homage, offerings, confession, rejoicing in virtue, requesting the buddhas to teach, supplicating the buddhas to remain, and dedication.

Seventeen levels of the form realm (*gzugs khams gnas rigs bcu bdun*): The form realm is divided into four concentrations (*bsam gtan bzhi*). In the first concentration there are three levels: Brahmā Type (*tshangs ris*); Brahmā Attendants (*tshangs bdun na 'don*); and Great Brahmā (*tshangs chen*).

In the second concentration there are three levels: Little Light (*'od chung*); Immeasurable Light (*tshad med 'od*); and Bright Light (*'od gsal*). In the third concentration there are three levels: Little Virtue (*dge chung*); Immeasurable Virtue (*tshad med dge*); and Vast Virtue (*dge rgyas*).

In the fourth concentration there are eight levels: Cloudless (*sprin med*); Born from Merit (*bsod nams skyes*); Great Fruit (*'bras bu che ba*); Not Great (*mi che ba*); Without Pain (*mi gdung ba*); Excellent Appearance (*gya nom snang ba*); Great Perception (*shin tu mthong ba*); and Not Low (San. *Akaniṣhṭha*; Tib. *'og min*). (GTD)

Shang Rinpoche (*Zhang rin po che*): Also called Tsöndru Drakpa and referred to as guru Shang (*bla ma Zhang*) and unborn Shang (*skye med Zhang*). Student of Dakpo Gomtsül, a nephew of Gampopa, and founder of the Tsalpa Kagyü. (1123–1194)

Shāntarakṣhita (*Zhi ba 'tsho*): Indian paṇḍita and abbot of Samye monastery who ordained the first Tibetan monks.

Shramaṇera (*dge tshul*): A novice monk.

Shrāvakas (*nyan thos*; hearers): Hīnayāna practitioners who attain nirvāṇa through practicing the first turning of the dharma wheel, the teachings on the four noble truths.

Siddha (*grub thob*; accomplished one): A realized being, someone who has attained siddhi. *See also* Siddhis

Siddhis, supreme and common (*mchog dang thun mong gi dngos grub*; attainments): The supreme siddhi is complete awakening. The common siddhis are worldly powers, such as clairvoyance and immortality.

Six classes of beings (*'gro ba rigs drug*): Hell-beings (*dmyal ba*), hungry ghosts (*yi dvags*), animals (*dud 'gro*), humans (*mi*), demigods (*lha min*), and gods (*lha*).

Six elements (*khams drug*): Earth (*sa*), water (*chu*), fire (*me*), wind (*rlung*), space (*nam mkha'*), and consciousness (*rnam par shes pa*).

Six pāramitās (*pha rol tu phyin pa drug*): (1) Generosity (*sbyin pa*); (2) ethical conduct (*tshul khrims*); (3) patience (*bzod pa*); (4) diligence (*brtson 'grus*); (5) meditative concentration (*bsam gtan*); (6) knowledge (*shes rab*).

Six sense consciousnesses; six senses (*rnam shes tshogs drug; tshogs drug*): Eye (*mig*), ear (*rna*), nose (*sna*), tongue (*lce*), body (*lus*), and mind (*yid*) consciousnesses.

Sixty-four excellent qualities of separation and maturation (*bral ba dang rnam par smin pa'i yon tan drug cu rtsa bzhi*): The excellent qualities of separation are the thirty-two qualities associated with the dharmakāya, which are the fruition of the separation from or relinquishment of the kleshas. They are the four fearlessnesses, ten powers, and eighteen distinctive qualities. *See* respective entries.

The excellent qualities of maturation are the thirty-two marks associated with the two form kāyas (the sambhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya), which are the fruition of the maturation of merit. (KTGR; *Highest Continuum*)

Solidify (*a 'thas*): This term refers to the compulsive and repetitive urge to take things to be truly existent, even when one knows intellectually that they are not. (KTGR)

Sons and daughters of the victorious ones (*rgyal ba'i sras*): Male and female bodhisattvas.

Special path (*khyad par gyi lam*): The end of the continuum of the tenth bhūmi (*sa bcu rgyun gyi tha ma*).

Special paths of the ten bhūmis (*sa bcu'i khyad par gyi lam*): The three pure bhūmis, i.e., the eighth though the tenth bhūmis.

Spiritual mentor (San. *kalyāṇamitra*; Tib. *dge ba'i bshes gnyen*): Also translated as "spiritual friend."

Spontaneous presence (*lhun grub*): Refers to the fact that emptiness is not simply empty; it is also luminous. It has always been this way; this is not something that is or can be newly produced. It is the nature of things from the beginning. (DPR)

Stable karma (*mi g.yos ba'i las*): The karma accumulated by the gods of the form and formless realms.

Stream-enterer (*rgyun zhugs*): The first of the four stages of the Hīnayāna paths and the attainment of the path of seeing.

Subtle-increasers (*phra rgyas*): A term used in abhidharma literature for the mental afflictions, signifying that they begin as something subtle but they increase in strength.

Suchness (San. *tathātā*; Tib. *de kho na nyid*): Synonym for emptiness or dharmatā, the ultimate nature.

Sugata (*bde bar gshegs pa*; those gone to bliss): An epithet for the Buddha or buddhas.

Superficial instructions of those of high rank (*sku chen gyi yom khrid*): Very general teachings given by administrative heads of monasteries who have little knowledge of the dharma. (DPR)

Superimposition (*sgro 'dogs*): To take something to exist in a way that it does not, e.g., to ascribe true existence to something that does not have true existence. Also translated as "exaggerations." *See also* Denigration

Supreme pair (*mchog zung*): Shāriputra and Maudgalyāyana.

Sūtras (*mdo*; discourses): Refers to either (1) the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna teachings given by the Buddha, as opposed to the tantras of the Vajrayāna, or (2) the scriptures of the sūtra piṭaka within the tripiṭaka, which are concerned with the training in samādhi (*ting nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa*).

Svabhāvakāya (San. or *svabhāvikakāya*; Tib. *ngo bo nyid sku*): Usually said to be the inseparability of the three kāyas; also explained as the emptiness of mind. (ODM)

Take direct hold of the very place of spontaneous presence (*lhun grub kyi rang sa tsir gyis 'dzin pa*): The realization of the spontaneous presence of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. (KTGR)

Taking and sending meditation (*gtong len*): The Mahāyāna meditation in which one visualizes taking on the sufferings of all beings and sending them all of one's own happiness.

Tathāgata (*de bzhin gshegs pa*; those gone to suchness): An epithet for the Buddha or buddhas.

Tathāgata Many Jewels (*de bzhin gshegs pa Rin chen mang*): *See* Names of the four tathāgatas

Tathāgata Truly Beautiful Form (*de bzhin gshegs pa gZugs dam pa*): *See* Names of the four tathāgatas

Ten bhūmis (*sa bcu*; ten grounds): (1) Very Joyful (*rab tu dga' ba*); (2) Stainless (*dri ma med pa*); (3) Illuminating (*'od byed pa*); (4) Radiant (*'od 'phro ba*); (5) Difficult to Overcome (*sbyang dka' ba*); (6) Manifest (*mngon du gyur pa*); (7) Gone Afar (*ring du song ba*); (8) Immovable (*mi g.yo ba*); (9) Excellent Intelligence (*legs pa'i blo gros*); and (10) Cloud of Dharma (*chos kyi sprin*).

Ten lower states (*ngan song gi gnas bcu*): *See* Twenty levels of the desire realm

Ten nonvirtuous actions (*mi dge ba bcu*): Divided into three of body, four of speech, and three of mind. The three of body are to

kill, steal, and engage in sexual misconduct. The four of speech are to lie, speak divisively, use harsh language, and engage in useless talk. The three of mind are to covet the possessions of others, have a malicious attitude, and hold wrong views.

Ten pāramitās (*pha rol tu phyin pa bcu*): (1) Generosity (*sbyin pa*); (2) ethical conduct (*tshul khrims*); (3) patience (*bzod pa*); (4) diligence (*brtson 'grus*); (5) meditative concentration (*bsam gtan*); (6) knowledge (*shes rab*); (7) method (*thabs*); (8) aspiration prayers (*smon lam*); (9) power (*stobs*); and (10) wisdom (*ye shes*).

Ten virtuous actions (*dge ba bcu*): Divided into four of body, three of speech, and three of mind. The three of body are not to kill, not to take what is not given, and not to engage in sexual misconduct. The four of speech are to speak the truth, not to speak divisively, to speak gently, and not to engage in useless talk. The three of mind are not to be covetous, not to be malicious, and to hold correct views.

Textual instructions of those with little intelligence (*shes chung gi dpe khrid*): Instructions given from texts by those who lack confidence in their understanding, experiences, or realization. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*)

Thing (*dngos po*): Defined as something that performs a function (*don byed nus pa*). *See also* Nonthing

Thirty-two excellent major marks (*mtshan bzang po so gnyis*): The marks of a perfect buddha, which are the excellent qualities of maturation.

Three attachments (*zhan pa gsum*): Attachment to the body (*lus*), possessions (*long spyod*), and places (*gnas*). (KTGR)

Three conventional attributes (*tha snyed gsum*): (1) Being a human (*mi yin pa*); (2) having a sound mind (*shes pa rang bzhin du gnas pa*); and (3) living in the desire realm (*'dod khams pa'i sa pa yin pa*). (GTD)

Three doors (*sgo gsum*): Body (*lus*), speech (*ngag*), and mind (*yid*).

Three doors of liberation (*rnam thar sgo gsum*): Emptiness (*stong nyid*); signlessness (*mtshan ma med pa*); and wishlessness (*smon pa med pa*).

Three jewels (*dkon mchog gsum*): Buddha (*sang rgyas*), dharma (*chos*), and saṅgha (*dge 'dun*).

Three kāyas (*sku gsum*): Dharmakāya (*chos sku*), sambhogakāya (*longs sku*), and nirmāṇakāya (*sprul sku*). *See* respective entries

Three levels (*sa gsum*): Above the earth (*sa bla*), on the earth (*sa steng*), and below the earth (*sa 'og*).

Three lower states (*ngan song gsum*): The states of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals.

Three nāḍīs (*rtsa gsum*): The three principal channels in the body: avadhūti (*dbu ma*), rasanā (*ro ma*), and lalanā (*rkyang ma*).

Three poisons (*dug gsum*): Desire (*'dod chags*), aggression (*zhe sdang*), and ignorance (*gti mug*).

Three pure bhūmis (*dag pa sa gsum*): Eighth, ninth, and tenth bhūmis.

Three realms (*khams gsum*): The desire (*'dod khams*), form (*gzugs khams*), and formless realms (*gzugs med khams*). *See* respective entries

Three spheres (*'khor gsum*): Actor (*byed pa po*), action (*bya ba'i las*), and the recipient of the action (*bya ba'i yul*). *See also* Threefold purity

Three states of existence (*srid pa gsum*): Gods who live above the earth, humans who live on the earth, and nāgas who live below the earth.

Three trainings (*bslab pa gsum*): The three principal aspects to the Buddhist path: (1) ethical conduct (*tshul khrims*); (2) samādhi (*ting nge 'dzin*); and (3) knowledge (*shes rab*).

Three types of suffering (*sdug bsngal gsum*): (1) The suffering of conditioning (*'du byed kyi sdug bsngal*); (2) the suffering of change (*'gyur ba'i kyi sdug bsngal*); and (3) the suffering of suffering (*sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsngal*).

Three vajras (*rdo rje gsum*): Vajra body, vajra speech, and vajra mind.

Three vows (*sdom pa gsum*): (1) The Hīnayāna vows of individual liberation (San. *prātimokṣha*; Tib. *so thar gyi sdom pa*); (2) the

Mahāyāna vows of a bodhisattva (*byang sems kyi sdom pa*); and (3) the Mantrayāna samayas (*sngags kyi dam tshig*).

Three yānas (*theg pa gsum*; three vehicles): Shrāvakayāna (*nyan thos kyi theg pa*); Pratyekabuddhayāna (*rang rgyal gyi theg pa*); and Mahāyāna (*theg pa chen po*). *See also* respective entries

Threefold purity (*'khor gsum yongs dag*): Not to conceive of the three spheres (*'khor gsum*): subject, object, and action.

Three phases of ritual (*cho ga gsum*): A three-step process for generating a yidam in meditation: (1) emptiness, (2) the seed syllable, and (3) the complete form of the deity. (DPR) Other sources describe the first two stages of this three-step process as (1) a seat with the seed syllable and (2) the symbolic attribute (*phyag mtshan*) marked with the seed syllable. (GTD and Tsepak Rigzin)

Tilopa: Indian mahāsiddha, teacher of Nāropa. (988–1069)

Tīrthikas; those who oppose the dharma (*mu stegs pa; mu stegs can*): A term traditionally used to refer to non-Buddhists, who, although they may be practicing a path of virtue, are unable to attain enlightenment. However, the connotation of the term is often a negative one, meaning those who oppose the dharma.

Tripiṭaka (*sde snod gsum*; three collections): Vinaya (*'dul ba*), sūtra (*mdo*), and abhidharma (*chos mngon pa*) teachings. *See* respective entries

Tsangpa Gyare (*gTsang pa rgya ras*): Student of Ling-je Repa and founder of the middle Drukpa Kagyü lineage. (1161–1211)

Twelve factors (i.e., the three sets of four) of the path of accumulation (*tshogs lam bzhi gsum bcu gnyis*): Twelve of the thirty-seven factors of awakening. These are grouped into three sets, each with four parts. (1) The four establishments in mindfulness (*dran pa nye bar bzhag pa bzhi*): of body, feeling, mind, and phenomena. (2) The four correct abandonments (*yang dag par spong pa bzhi*): to abandon negative actions and nonvirtue that have already developed; not to generate negative actions or qualities that have not developed; to generate virtuous qualities that have not developed; and to increase those virtues that have developed. (3) The four legs of magical emanation (*rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi*): the samādhis of aspiration, diligence, thought, and analysis.

Twelve sets of one hundred excellent qualities (*yon tan brgya phrag bcu gnyis*): The excellent qualities attained on the first bhūmi and multiplied on the subsequent bhūmis by factors of ten. Bodhisattvas on the first bhūmi are able to (1) see one hundred buddhas in an instant; (2) know that they are being blessed by those buddhas; (3) send out one hundred emanations; (4) travel to one hundred buddha realms; (5) see past and future births throughout one hundred aeons; (6) be absorbed in and arise from one hundred types of samādhi; (7) mature one hundred beings; (8) shake one hundred buddha realms; (9) illuminate one hundred buddha realms; (10) open one hundred entrances to the dharma; (11) display one hundred forms of their own bodies; and (12) surround each of those forms with one hundred bodhisattvas. (GTD)

Twenty levels of the desire realm (*'dod khams gnas rigs nyi shu*): The ten lower states: the eight hot hells, the hungry ghost state, and the animal state; the four human continents; and the six classes of desire realm gods.

Twenty secondary mental afflictions (*nye nyon nyi shu*): Wrath (*khro ba*); resentment (*'khon 'dzin*); concealment (*'chab ba*); spite (*'tshig pa*); jealousy (*phrag dog*); miserliness (*ser sna*); deceit (*sgyu bcas*); dissimulation (*g.yo*); haughtiness (*rgyags pa*); harmfulness (*rnam 'tshe*); nonshame (*ngo tsha med*); nonembarrassment (*khrel med*); lethargy (*rmugs pa*); agitation (*rgod pa*); nonfaith (*ma dad pa*); laziness (*le lo*); nonconscientiousness (*bag med*); forgetfulness (*brjed nges*); distraction (*rnam g.yeng*); and nonintrospection (*shes bzhin ma yin pa*).

Two accumulations (*tshogs gnyis*): Merit (*bsod nams*) and wisdom (*ye shes*).

Two benefits (*don gnyis*): Benefit for oneself (*rang don*) and benefit for others (*gzhan don*).

Two form kāyas (*gzugs sku gnyis*): Sambhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya. The form kāyas arise from the actualization of the illusionlike samādhi and so forth, or they arise from the aspect of knowledge that knows the varieties [of phenomena]. (ODM) *See* respective entries

Two higher realms (*khams gong ma gnyis*): The form and formless realms. *See* respective entries

Two obscurations (*sgrib gnyis*): Obscurations of mental afflictions and regarding objects of knowledge. *See* respective entries

Two stages (*rim gnyis*): Generation-stage meditation and completion-stage meditation. *See* respective entries

Twofold knowledge (*mkhyen pa gnyis*): Knowledge that knows the varieties of phenomena (*ji snyed mkhyen pa*) and knowledge of the mode of phenomena (*ji lta ba mkhyen pa*). *See* respective entries

Unborn (*skye ba med pa*): *See* Nonarising

Undercurrents of thoughts (*rtog pa 'og 'gyu*): Thoughts that operate on a subconscious level and usually go unnoticed. (DPR)

Union beyond training (*mi slob pa'i zung 'jug*): The attainment of complete awakening.

Upāsaka (*dge bsnyen*; lay followers): Practitioners who have taken refuge and who may also have taken any of the five root vows of individual liberation.

Uragas (*lto 'phyes*; stomach-crawlers): Beings who move on their stomachs, such as nāgas and snakes. (GTD)

Vajra knot (*rdo rje mdud pa*): Another name for a meditation belt. *See* Meditation belt

Vajra position (*rdo rje skyil krung*): The cross-legged meditation position where each foot rests on the opposite thigh.

Vajrayāna (*rdo rje theg pa*): The tantric teachings of the Mahāyāna. It is the short path (*nye lam*) that utilizes a variety of methods that take the results of awakening as the path. Also called Secret Mantra or the resultant vehicle (*'bras bu'i theg pa*).

Vehicle of Characteristics (*mtshan nyid theg pa*): A name for the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna vehicles as taught in the sūtras. Also known as the Causal Vehicle (*rgyu'i theg pa*).

Victorious One (San. *jina*; Tib. *rgyal ba*): An epithet for the Buddha or buddhas.

Victorious ones of the five families (*rgyal ba rigs lnga*): The five male buddhas: Vairochana, Akṣhobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi.

Vidyādharas (*rig 'dzin*; awareness-holder): Meditation practitioners who have attained levels of accomplishment. The term may be used for non-Buddhists as well as Buddhists.

Views of the transitory collection (*'jig tshogs la lta ba*): To regard the five skandhas, which are transitory and composite, as a truly existent self or as belonging to such a self. There are twenty divisions of this mistaken view.

Vinaya (*'dul ba*): The collection of the Buddha's teachings on monastic discipline; it develops the training of ethical conduct (*tshul khrims kyi bslab pa*).

Virūpa: Indian mahāsiddha whose student Drogmi Lotsāwa was the founder of the Sakya lineage.

Wisdom (San. *jñāna*, Tib. *ye shes*): Also translated as "primordial wisdom."

Without a basis; groundless (*gzhi med; gzhi ma grub pa*): The lack of any truly existing support. (KTGR)

Without conceptual identification (*ngos bzung med pa; ngos bzung dang bral ba*): There is no labeling of an object or an experience as being one way or another. There is no attempt to pin something down and describe it. (DPR)

Word-instructions of paṇḍitas (*paṇ ḍi ta'i tshig khrid*): Instructions given by those who have understood all the words and have certainty about their unerring understanding of the meaning of the words. (*Treasury of Oral Instructions*)

World's Forefather (*'jig rten gyi mes po*): An epithet for Brahmā.

Yama (*gshin rje*): The lord of death.

Yakde Panchen (*gYag sde pan chen*): A Sakya scholar and student of Rangjung Dorje, the third Karmapa. (1299–1378)

Yidams (*yi dam*): Meditational deities. They are called "the root of siddhis" (*dngos grub kyi rtsa ba*).

Yojana (*dpag tshad*): A measurement described in the Abhidharma literature as being eight "shouting distances" (*rgyang grags*), each of which are five hundred "bow fathoms" (*gzhu 'dom*). It is said to correspond to approximately 4.5 miles.

Glossary II

Experiential Words

The comments provided here have been gathered from teachings and informal conversations with Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche (KTGR) and Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche (DPR), and do not represent the complete or final definition of any given word. I have included them to impart some sense of these words, which should serve as a basis for further inquiry. Note that, since these are "experiential terms," explanations of them will differ from teacher to teacher. Definitions from the *Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary* (GTD) have been included in some cases to provide a fuller description.

Note that, in some cases, alternative translations are introduced here by the words "also translated as." These indicate how other translators have approached some of these terms, and do not refer to usages in this text

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
krong	trong	intensified	To concentrate so intently that everything is intensified. (DPR)
krong nge, zung 'jug gcig tu	trong-nge, zung-jug chik-tu	unified, fused as one	*Krong nge* expresses the sense of union (*zung 'jug*). (KTGR)

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
khra lam gyis	tra lam-gyi	vividly	
khrig ge ba	trik ge-wa	fused	
khres se	tre-se	spacious	To be free from the obstruction of thoughts. A nonthought gap or space. Similar to "soar" (*phyal le*). (DPR)
gu yangs	gu-yang	spacious	Also translated as "carefree."
glod pa	lö-pa	to relax; let go	The act of letting go, like letting a trapped animal out of its cage. It means to loosen one's fixations (*'dzin pa glod pa*). (DPR)
cer gyis; cer cer	cher-gyi; cher-cher	directly; nakedly	
cham gyis	cham gyi	pervasive	
cham cham 'gro ba; cham cham 'char ba	cham-cham dro-wa; cham-cham char-wa	to expand	
cham me ba	cham me-wa	expansive	Generally, *cham me ba* (or *cham*) has the sense of pervasive (*khyab pa*). (DPR)
rjen ne ba	jen-ne-wa	naked	

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
rjen lhan gis; rjen lhang nge ba; rjen lhang lhang	jen lhang-gi; jen lhang-nge-wa; jen lhang-lhang	nakedly, straight at; nakedly and vividly; stark naked	Words that express a total lack of obscurations. (KTGR)
mnyam khad de	nyam ke-de	balance in equality	*Khad de* has the sense of immediacy, "at that very moment." At the very point of reaching equality, one leaves one's mind there. (DPR)
ta le ba	ta-le-wa	vivid	Synonymous with clear (*wal le*) and brilliant (*gsal le*). (GTD)
stong sang nge ba	tong sang-nge-wa	utterly empty	Expresses the way emptiness appears (*stong pa'i snang tshul*). (GTD)
thal le	tal-le	transparent	Synonymous with *zang thal* (also translated as "transparent"). (DPR)
dangs ba	dang-wa	lucid; clear; transparent	Expresses emptiness with its qualities of clarity and purity. (DPR)
dangs sing nge ba	dang sing-nge-wa	vibrant lucidity	An uplifted, fresh feeling, like waking up. (DPR)
dangs gsal le ba	dang-sel-le-wa	vividly lucid	
dvangs pa; dvangs cha	dang-pa; dang-cha	lucid; clear	Clean, clear; like clear weather. (DPR) (1) To be clear. (2) To be free from stains or murkiness. (GTD)

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
gdangs; gdangs ma	dang; dang-ma	radiance	Means the continuity of light. (DPR) Also translated as "expression."
bde cham; bde cham gyis 'gro	de-cham; de-cham gyi dro	pervading bliss; with ease	
bde phril le ba	de tril-le-wa	pervasive blissful feeling	
bde gsal le ba	de sel-le-wa	vividly blissful	
mdangs; rang mdangs	dang; rang-dang	brilliance; radiance; self-radiance	Emphasizes the quality of clarity, as in visual clarity. (DPR) Luster (*bkrag*). (GTD) Also translated as "brightness."
'dos se	dö-se	at ease	Synonymous with "relaxed" (*lhod pa*) and "loose" (*shig ge*). (DPR)
rnam rtog mi 'gyu dgu 'gyu	nam-tok mi-gyu gu-gyu	rambling thoughts	
spom me yo re	pom-me yo-re	still	To be unmoving. (DPR)
spring nge ba	tring-nge-wa	stretched out	To extend or be continuous, like a thread. (KTGR)
phyad de	che-de	opening; openness	Synonymous with "gap" *he-de* (*had de*). (DPR)

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
phyal le	chal-le	soar	To be loose (*lhug pa*), spacious. (DPR)
bag yangs	ba-yang	carefree	A spacious state of mind. (GTD)
bun ne	bun-ne	let it be open	Conveys a sense of emptiness without much of the quality of clarity. It has the sense of letting go, without identifying anything. (DPR)
bun long	bun-long	hazy	
'bo ltos se ba	bo tö-se-wa	tranquil	Relaxed; a state where the mind has settled into itself (*rang babs*). (KTGR and DPR)
'bol le	böl-le	buoyant; light	The experience of a blissful state. To be relaxed and comfortable. (KTGR) *'Bol* has a sense of softness. It is the feeling one gets when sitting on a soft sofa or soft cushions. One feels loose and relaxed, with a feeling of lightness and weightlessness. (DPR) Example: trampling on fleece. (ODM) Also translated as "at ease."
'bol shig ge; 'bol le shig ge	böl shig-ge; böl-le shig-ge	light openness; lightly and freely	Synonymous with "loose" (*lhod pa*). (DPR)

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
sbun si li li	bun si-li-li	sparklingly clear	Means "lucid" (*dangs*). *Si li li* means luminous, describing the quality of *bun*. (KTGR) *Bun* means "clear" (*gsal*). (DPR)
me re	me-re	still; serene; vivid	An intensifier. When paired with nonconceptuality, it means "still, calm"; with clarity, it means "vivid, crisp, brilliant." (DPR)
mi dran dgu dran	mi-dren gu-dren	thinking all sorts of things	
tsen; tsen gyis; tsen ne	tsen; tsen-gyi; tsen-ne	still; quietly; calm	Expresses "settling into itself" (*rang babs*). (KTGR) Means "still" or "quiet."
tshom mun ne	tsom mün-ne	dark	Refers to an experience of mental dullness. (DPR)
zang thal	zang-tal	transparent	Synonymous with "no reference point" (*gtad med*), "spacious" (*gu yangs*), "carefree" (*bag yangs*), and "completely relaxed" (*lhod yangs*). It is like the unobstructed sky. (KTGR) Without obstructions. (GTD) Also translated as "unobstructed" and "directly penetrating."
wal gyis; wal le ba	wal-gyi; wal-le-wa	clearly; radiant	*Wal gyis* means "clearly," though sometimes it also (continued)

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
wal gyis; wal le ba	wal-gyi; wal-le-wa	clearly; radiant	means "quickly" (*lam gyis*). (DPR)
yal le	yal-le	transparent; vivid	
yal le phyad de	yal-le che-de	transparent openness	Expresses the state of being free from any fixations. (KTGR)
ye re ba; ye re	ye-re-wa; ye-re	crisp; vivid; sharp	Also translated as "lucid openness."
yer gyis	yer gyi	directly; suddenly; immediately	
rig rig tur tur po	rig-rig tur-tur-po	keenly aware, vividly clear	*Rig rig* and *tur tur* have the same meaning: a clear, vivid mind (*shes pa gsal sang sang*). (KTGR) *Tur tur* means clear (*gsal po*). (GTD) Also translated as "sparkling awareness."
lam me	lam-me	resplendent	The brilliant illumination or manifest splendor of colors. (GTD)
shig ge	shig-ge	loose; unrestrained; free	Effortless (*rtsol med*). Example: cutting the binding on a sheaf and letting it fall. (ODM)
shig bshig	shig-shig	loosen up	
sa le ba	sa-le-wa	vivid	

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
si li li	si-li-li	crisp	Vibrantly clear (*gsal sing nge ba*). (KTGR) The expression usually describes distinct, sharp sounds. (DPR)
sing nge; sing nge ba	sing-nge; sing-nge-wa	vibrant	Conveys the sense of waking up, feeling invigorated, as when, feeling drowsy, one throws ice water on oneself. Synonymous with "lucidity" (*dvang ba*). (DPR) Also translated as "pure" or "clear."
gsal dangs sing nge ba	sel-dang sing-nge-wa	vibrant clarity and lucidity	
gsal yer re ba	sel ye-re-wa	vivid clarity	
gsal lam gyis	sel lam-gyi	vividly	
gsal le; gsal le ba	sel-le; sel-le-wa	brilliant; illuminating	Expresses the experience of letting the mind settle into its nature of clarity and emptiness. (KTGR) Brilliant, vivid. (DPR) Also translated as "luminous."
gsal hrig ge ba	sel hrig-ge-wa	sharp clarity	
had de	he-de	gap; openness	A state of feeling stunned, as when surprised or in shock. (continued)

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
had de	he-de	gap; openness	A state without any thoughts of past, present, or future; without any clinging, as when petrified by fear or overwhelmed by bliss. (KTGR) A spaced-out condition where the experience of emptiness predominates, though with some clarity. A "gap" experience. (DPR) A mental state lacking in clarity or an experience of losing consciousness (*dran pa thor*). (GTD) Also translated as "startled awareness," "a state of shock."
had de phyad de	he-de che-de	gap, opening	A state free from fixations (*'dzin med*), without any reference points (*dmigs med*), and beyond conceptual elaborations (*spros bral*). (KTGR)
hrig ge	hrig-ge	sharp	A nonconceptual, unobscured state where one sees one's own nature. (KTGR) Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche demonstrated this by staring straight ahead with wide-open eyes. It is nonthought, like a gap experience. It is the experience of seeing something scary, when one's eyes become wide-open. (DPR) (continued)

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
hrig ge	hrig-ge	sharp	Defined as vibrant clarity (*gsal sing nge be*). (GTD) Also translated as "dazzling," "glaring," and "wakeful."
hrig ge ye re ba	hrig-ge yer-re-wa	staring sharply	
lhangs gyis	lhang gyi	clearly; vividly	
lhang nge	lhang-nge	naked	To be without obscurations. (KTGR) Means "naked," without any fabrications. (DPR) Also translated as "vivid."
lhang lhang	lhang-lhang	vivid	To be manifestly clear or not hidden. (GTD)
lhan gyis	lhen-gyi	simply; easily; effortlessly	Means there is no difference between what is dissolving and where it dissolves, like waves dissolving into the ocean. (KTGR) Expresses the sense of noncontrivance. (DPR)
lhan ne	lhen-ne	quiet	Means both "undisturbed" and "clear." (DPR) Also translated as "quietly present."
lhod; lhod de	lhö; lhö-de	relaxed; without tension; loosely	

Wylie Tibetan	Phonetic Tibetan	English	Glossary
lhod kyis glod	lhö-kyi-lö	relaxed and loose; loosen by relaxing; totally relaxed	Literally "loosen up by relaxing." The phrase describes the process of relaxing. (DPR) Also translated as "letting go by relaxing."
lhug pa	lhug-pa	loose; relaxed; carefree	To be without contrivance, naturally settled. (KTGR) This is the state of being loose or relaxed, as opposed to "letting go" *glod pa*. It means to remain in a blissful, comfortable state. (DPR) Also translated as "alertly relaxed" and "naturally at ease."
a phyad de ba	a-che de-wa	expansive	

Glossary III

Tibetan-English Glossary

ཀ

kun tu bzang po'i spyod pa	always-excellent conduct
kun brtags pa'i ma rig pa	acquired ignorance
kun gzhi	all-basis
kun gzhi'i rnam shes	all-basis consciousness
klog pa'i slob dpon	master for reading
dkar po'i chos bzhi	four positive qualities
dkon mchog gsum	three jewels
dkrugs pa rkyen	agitated conditions; situations; circumstances; catalyst
skad cig dran rdzogs	complete-in-the-moment-of-recollection
sku 'byams klas	Infinite Supreme Body
sku gsum	three kāyas
skur 'debs	denigration
skyabs yul	sources of refuge
skye mched	āyatana
skye gnas rnam pa bzhi	four modes of birth
skye ba med pa	nonarising; unborn
skyo shas; skyo ba	weariness; sadness
skyong ba	to sustain; to maintain; to train

skyon	faults; problems; fallacy; defects
bskyed rim	generation-stage meditation

ཁ

kha la me 'bar ma	She with Blazing Mouth
khams gong ma gnyis	two higher realms
khams drug	six elements
khams 'dus	gathering of the element
khams gsum	three realms
khyad chos bzhi	four distinguishing qualities
khyad par gyi lam	special path
khrid	instructions; instruct; guide
mkha' lding	garuḍa
mkhas btsun bzang	scholarly, well-disciplined, and virtuous
mkhyen pa gnyis	twofold knowledge
'khor ba	saṃsāra; cycle
'khor los sgyur pa	chakravartin
'khor gsum	three spheres
'khor gsum yongs dag	threefold purity
'khrul 'khor	meditation posture; yogic exercises

ག

gegs	hindrance
go ba	intellectual understanding
goms	accustomed; developed; steeped; inured
gol sa	straying
grang dmyal brgyad	eight cold hells
grim gyis bgrims	concentrate intently

grims pa	taut
grub thob	siddha
dgag sgrub	stop or produce; block or encourage
dga' ba bzhi	four joys
dge bsnyen	upāsaka
dge ba	virtue; virtuous actions
dge ba'i bshes gnyen	spiritual mentor
dge tshul	shramaṇera
dge tshul gyi slob dpon	master for shramaṇera [vows]
dge slong	bhikṣhu
dgongs pa	realization; intention; consideration
dgos med kyi blo	mind free from need; renunciation
dgra bcom pa	arhat
bgegs	obstructing spirit
mgo gnon	to suppress
'gag med; ma 'gags pa	unceasing; unimpeded
'gal med	no paradox; no contradiction
'gugs pa	to summon back; to summon; to draw in
'gyu ba	conceptual movement; movement
'gro ba rigs drug	six classes of beings
rgan mo'i mdzub khrid; rgan mo mdzub tshugs	pointing-out instructions for old women
rgya chad phyogs lhung dang bral	has no dimension and does not fall to any side
rgya chen spyod pa'i rgyud	lineage of vast conduct
rgya yan	uncontrolled
rgya yan du btang	let be free
rgyang so btsugs	post the watchman; set the watchman
rgyal chen rigs bzhi	Four Great Royal Lineages
rgyal ba	victorious one

rgyal ba rigs lnga	victorious ones of the five families
rgyal ba'i sres	sons and daughters of the victorious ones
rgyas gdab pa	to seal
rgyu mthun gyi 'dras bu	result corresponding to the cause
rgyud	mind-stream
rgyud	tantra
rgyud sde bzhi	four classes of tantras
rgyun mtha'i sa	bhūmi that is the end of the continuum
rgyun zhugs	stream-enterer
rgyu'i rkyen	causal condition
sgo gsum	three doors
sgom thag	meditation belt
sgom bdag po med	disowning your meditation
sgom lam	path of meditation
sgrib pa bzhi	four obscurations
sgrim pa	to tighten [one's concentration]; to tighten
sgrub pa'i maṇ ḍal	practice maṇḍala
sgro 'dogs	superimposition; doubts
bsgom du med	no-meditation; without meditating; nothing to meditate on; not meditate

ང

ngan 'gro; ngan song	lower states
ngan song gi gnas bcu	ten lower states
ngan song gsum	three lower states
ngar	forceful; intensified; sharp
ngal bso	to take a break; to rest; relaxation
nges don	definitive meaning

nges 'byed cha thun	partial concordance with definite differentiation
nges tshig	etymology
nges legs	definite goodness
nges shes	certainty; conviction; confidence
ngo sprod	pointing-out instructions; to point out
ngo 'phrod	recognition; to recognize [the nature of mind]
ngo bo	essence; nature
ngo bo nyid kyis stong pa	empty of an essence
ngo bo nyid sku	svabhāvakāya
ngo shes pa	to recognize
ngos tsir gyis bzung; ngo yis tsir gyis zung; ngos tsir gyis zin pa	immediately recognize
ngos zin pa	to recognize; to identify
ngos bzung med pa; ngos bzung dang bral ba	without conceptual identification; not identified
dngos don	actual nature
dngos po	thing
dngos po gshis kyi gnas tshul	basic nature of things
dngos por ma grub; dngos po bden par grub pa med	not exist as a real thing; not truly existent things
dngos med	nonthing
dngos 'dzin	to reify; reification; to fixate on things; to take to be a thing; to solidify; to take to be real
dngos gzhi	actual practice; actual ceremony; actual ground
mngon 'gyu'i rtog pa	gross thoughts
mngon mtho	elevated states
mngon du gyur ba	to manifest; to realize; to manifest fully
mngon pa gong ma	higher abhidharma
mngon pa 'og ma	lower abhidharma

mngon par shes pa lnga	five supercognitions
mngon byang lnga	fivefold manifest awakening

ཅ

cig car ba	instantaneous type
gcig du bral	lack of being one or many
gcig shes kun grol	knowing one liberates all; liberate everything through knowing the one
bcom ldan 'das	bhagavat
cha mthun gyi bslab bya	[figuratively] concordant precepts

ཆ

chags zhen	clinging
cho ga gsum	threefold ritual
cho 'phrul	magical display
chos	dharma; phenomena; qualities
chos kyi phyag rgya	dharmamudrā
chos sku	dharmakāya
chos skyong srung ma	dharma protectors and guardians
chos mngon pa	abhidharma
chos nyid	dharmatā
chos nyid kyi don	truth of dharmatā
chos nyid zad sar 'khyol	dharmatā is brought to the place of exhaustion
chos dbyings	dharmadhātu
chos dbyings ye shes	wisdom of the dharmadhātu
mchog gi dang thun mong gi dngos grub	supreme and common siddhis
mchog zung	supreme pair

mchod pa'i rten; rten	representations; support for offerings
mchod pa'i maṇ ḍal	offering maṇḍala
'chad rtsod rtsom	exposition, debate, and composition
'char sgo	manifestations

ཇ

ji snyed mkhyen pa	knowledge of the varieties [of phenomena]
ji lta ba mkhyen pa	knowledge of the mode [of phenomena]
'jig rten chos rgyad	eight worldly qualities
'jig pa thams cad dang 'bral ba	Completely Fearless
'jig tshogs la lta ba	view of the transitory collection
'jug pa'i byang chub sems	engaged bodhichitta
'jog pa	to place
rje btsun; rje	exalted; exalted one
rjes snang	appearances during postmeditation
rjes shes	mental state during postmeditation; mind during postmeditation; mental experience during postmeditation

ཉ

nyan thos	shrāvaka
nyams	experience
nyams len byin rlabs kyi rgyud pa	lineage of practice [based on] blessings

nyams su len pa	to practice; to bring into experience
nyi tshe ba'i stong nyid	partial emptiness
nyi tshe ba'i dmyal ba	occasional hells
nye 'khor ba'i dmyal gnas	neighboring hells
nye nyon nyi shu	twenty secondary mental afflictions
nye ba'i sras brgyad	eight close sons
nyer ba'i mtshams med lnga	five secondary acts of immediate consequence
nyer len gyi phung po	perpetuating skandhas
nyon mongs	mental afflictions
gnyis 'dzin	dualistic perception
gnyug ma	intrinsic state
mnyam nyid ye shes	wisdom of equality
mnyam bzhag	meditative equipoise; rest evenly
snying po	essence
bsnyen par rdzogs pa	full ordination

ཏ

ting nge 'dzin	samādhi; meditative stabilization
gtan la phab	to determine; to resolve
gtum mo	chaṇḍālī
gtong len	taking and sending
rtag chad	permanence and nihilism
rten 'brel	dependent origination; dependent-arisings; dependently arisen; interdependent connections; auspicious connections
rtog ge ba	logician
rtog pa gya gyu	whole range of thoughts
rtogs pa	realization; to realize; to know; to have certainty

lta stangs kyi yul; lta yul	the way an object is perceived; an observed object; the viewed object
lto phyes	uragas
steng rlung dang 'og rlung	upper and lower prāṇas
stong chen po	great emptiness
stong nyid snying rje'i snying po can	emptiness unified with compassion
stong lta had po	nullifying view of emptiness
stong pa nyid	emptiness
stong phyogs	facet of emptiness
stong 'dzin	to apprehend emptiness; fixation on emptiness
stong gsum	billion-world system
stobs	powers
stobs bzhi	four powers
brtag pa	to examine; to investigate
blta ba	to look
bsten	to rely upon; to attend; to follow; to practice

ཐ

tha snyad	conventional expression; conventional terms; labels
tha snyad gsum	three conventional attributes
tha mal gyi shes pa; tha mal gyi sems	ordinary mind
thams cad mkhyen pa	omniscience
thar pa	liberation
thur sel gyi rlung	downwards-expelling prāṇa
theg pa chen po	Mahāyāna
theg pa dman pa	Hīnayāna
theg pa gsum	three yānas

thog du; thog rang du	on the basis of; right within; right on; right with; immediately on
thog ma'i sems; dang po'i sems	original mind
thod rgal ba	bypassing type
thos pa	listening; study
mtha'	extreme
mtha' bzhi	four ends
mthar thug pa	ultimate; final; definitively
mthar phyin	culmination
mthar phyin pa'i lam	path of completion
mtho ris	higher states
mthong lam	path of seeing
'thibs pa	drowsiness
'thug po	stagnate

ད

da lta'i rig pa skad cig ma	present moment of awareness
da ltar gyi shes pa; da ltar gyi sems	present mind
dag snang	pure perception
dag pa gnyis ldan gyi chos sku	dharmakāya endowed with twofold purity
dag pa sa gsum	three pure bhūmis
dang ba'i dad pa	inspired faith
dangs ma	quintessence
dad pa gsum	three kinds of faith
dam tshig	samaya
dam tshig phyag rgya	samayamudrā
dal ba dang 'byor ba	leisures and opportunities
du ma ro gcig	the one taste of the many; the many are of one taste
dug lnga	five poisons
dug gsum	three poisons

de kho na nyid; de bzhin nyid; de nyid	suchness
de ma thag pa'i rkyen	proximate condition
de bzhin gshegs pa	tathāgata
de bzhin gshegs pa bzhi'i mtshan	names of the four tathāgatas
de bzhin gshegs pa gzugs dam pa	tathāgata Truly Beautiful Form
de bzhin gshegs pa rin chen mang	tathāgata Many Jewels
don	meaning; nature; objects; reality; state; point; topics; benefits
don gyi nas lugs	actual abiding nature
don rgyud	lineage of meaning
don gnyis	two benefits
don dam pa'i dbyings	ultimate expanse
don spyi	generic image
drang don	provisional meaning
drang srong	ṛṣhi
dran pa	mindfulness
dran pa rgyun chad med pa	continuous mindfulness
dran pa zin pa	to be mindful
dran 'dzin gyi rtsol ba	effort of being mindful
drod rtags	signs
gdags gzhi; gdags sa	basis of designation
gdams ngag	instructions
gdul bya	disciples; those to be trained
gdod nas 'char	arise from where it has always been
gdod ma	primordial; beginning
gdod ma'i dbyings	primordial expanse
gdod ma'i gshis	primordial state
gdon klu	nāga demons
gdon rgyal po	king-demons
gdon sa bdag	earth-lord demons
bdag	self; self-entity

bdag nyid	essential nature; nature; embodiment
bdag po'i rkyen	empowering condition
bdag med	lack of a self-entity
bdag 'dzin	apprehension of a self (or self-entity); to fixate on a self
bdud	māra
bde 'gro	happy states; higher states
bde stong phyag chen	mahāmudrā of bliss-emptiness
bde stong lhan skyes	connateness of bliss-emptiness
bde ba	bliss
bde ba chen po'i sku	mahāsukhakāya
bde bar gshegs pa	sugata
bden pa	real; true; true existence
bden par grub pa	to exist truly; to be real; to have true existence
bden par 'dzin pa; bden par zhen pa	to apprehend as real; to fixate on things as real; to take to be real
bden med; mi bden pa	untrue; unreal
mdo	sūtra
'du shes gsum pa	one with only three ideas
'dul ba	vinaya
'dus byas	composite; conditioned
'dod khams	desire realm
'dod khams gnas rigs nyi shu	twenty levels of the desire realm
'dod pa'i dad pa	aspiring faith
'dod yon	sense pleasures
rdo rje skyil krung	vajra position
rdo rje theg pa	Vajrayāna
rdo rje gsum	three vajras
rdo rje'i mdud pa	vajra knot
rdo rus gtugs	bring rock to meet bone
ldog chos	isolate quality
sdigs pa	negative actions
sdug sngal gsum	three types of suffering

sde gnod	piṭakas
sde snod gsum	tripiṭaka
sdom gsum	three vows
brda	symbol; symbolic

ན

nag po kha 'byams	glibness
nag po can lcam dral	Bernakchen and consort
nag po'i cho bzhi	four negative qualities
nan tan	to apply one's self; to persevere
gnad	essential point; key point; vital point; purpose
gnad du bsnun	penetrate the essential points; apply the key point
gnas kyi slob dpon	resident master
gnas ngan len pa	negative tendencies
gnas gnas po gsal gsal po bde bde po	quietly resting, vividly clear, and delightfully blissful
gnas pa	resting; to rest; still
gnas 'tshol ba	to bring to rest
gnas lugs	abiding nature
gnas lugs kyi don	abiding nature; meaning of the abiding nature; actual abiding nature
gnas lugs phyag chen	mahāmudrā of the abiding nature
mnar med	Most Torturous
rnam kun mchog ldan gyi stong pa nyid	emptiness endowed with the supreme of all aspects
rnam rtog	thoughts; concepts
rnam rtog 'phro ba	thinking; a proliferation of thoughts; to provoke thoughts; to set off thoughts

rnam rtogs gzung 'dzin	dualistic thoughts
rnam thar sgo gsum	three doors of liberation
rnam snang gi chos bdun	seven-point posture of Vairochana
rnam pa	aspect; manifestation
rnam smin	maturation
rnam smin gyi 'bras bu	fully matured result
rnal 'byor bzhi	four yogas
rnal 'byor bzhi gsum bcu gnyis	twelve levels of the four yogas
rnal ma	natural state; genuine; true
snang ba	appearance
snang la ma nges pa	appearance without ascertainment
snang srid	appearances; whatever is possible to appear
snang srid phyag rgya chen po	mahāmudrā of all phenomena

པ

dpag tshad	*yojana*; miles
dpa' bo dang mkha' 'gro ma	ḍākas and ḍākinīs
dpal be'u	glorious knot
dpe byad bzang po brgyad cu	eighty excellent minor marks
dpyod pa	to analyze
spang bya	what is to be abandoned; factors to be abandoned
spang bya'i lhag rol	residual factors to be abandoned
spang slang	abandoning or adopting
spangs rtogs kyi yon tan	excellent qualities of relinquishment and realization
spyi'i bslab bya	general precepts
spyod pa rnam pa bzhi	four daily activities
spyod yul	scope; sphere of experience
sprul sku	nirmāṇakāya

sprod pa	conceptual elaborations; elaborations
spros bsdus	thoughts; thinking or not thinking

ཕ

pha rol tu phyin pa bcu	ten pāramitās
pham pa	a defeat
phar phyin theg pa	Pāramitāyāna
phung po lnga	five skandhas
phyal ba	nothingness
phyogs las rnam rgyal gyi spyod pa	conduct that is victorious-in-all-directions
phyogs su lhung	fall into a bias
phra rgyas	subtle-increasers
phrin las	activity
'phags pa	noble being
'phags lam	path of noble beings
'phags lam yan lag brgyad	eightfold path of noble beings
'phel sgrib	fluctuations
'phrang gsum bsgral	crossing the three difficult passages
'phral shor	temporary deviation
'phro rgod	scattering and agitation
'phro bcad; 'phro gcod	to suspend; to end; to stop
'phro ba	to think; scatter; appear; thoughts proliferate; be active [with thoughts]; mental activity; provoke [thoughts]

བ

bag chags	habitual tendency

bag med	carelessness; inattentive
bu'i 'od gsal	child luminosity
bem po	matter
bogs 'don	enhancement; enhance the development [of practice]
bya grub ye shes	wisdom that accomplishes activities
byang chub	awakening
byang chub kyi yan lag bdun	seven branches of awakening
byang chub kyi sems	bodhichitta
byang chub sems dpa'	bodhisattva
byung gnas 'gro	arising, abiding, and departing
byung tshor	arising of feelings; thoughts and feelings
bye brag gi bslab bya	particular precepts
byed pa po	agent; creator
bral ba dang rnam par smin pa'i yon tan drug cu rtsa bzhi	sixty-four excellent qualities of separation and maturation
blo	conceptual mind; intellect; relative mind; idea
blo sna bstung	shorten one's perspective
blo bral	free from the intellect; beyond the conceptual mind
blos byas	conceptually created; intellectually created; intellectual constructs; conceptually fabricated; conceptually contrived
dbang gi 'bras bu	dominant result
dbang thob pa	to master
dbang po sgo lnga	five senses
dbang bzhi	four empowerments
dben pa	isolation
dbu ma	avadhūti
'byung ba lnga	five elements
'byung ba bzhi	four elements
'byor ba	opportunities

'byor ba bcu	ten opportunities
sbyang ba'i 'phro can	possess the continuity of training
sbyor lam	path of preparation
sbrid	numb

མ

ma grub pa	not truly existent
ma rgan sems can	mother sentient beings
ma bcos	uncontrived; without contrivance; without artifice; not fabricated
ma dag sa bdun	seven impure bhūmis
ma nam bzhi skor	four "Mother" verses
ma yengs	undistracted; unwavering
ma rig pa	ignorance
ma'i 'od gsal	mother luminosity
mi khom pa'i gnas brgyad	eight states without leisure
mi dge ba	nonvirtues; nonvirtuous actions
mi chos bla ma'i rdzun	to lie about one's attainments
mi 'jigs pa	fearlessnesses
mi rtog pa	nonconceptuality
mi dmigs pa	without any reference point; without an object of observation; not conceive; not focus; nonconceptual.
mi 'am ci	kiṃnaras
mi g.yos ba'i las	stable karma
mi slob pa'i zung 'jug	union beyond training
mig yul	visual object
mu stegs pa; mu stegs can	tīrthikas; those who oppose the dharma
me long lta bu ye shes	mirrorlike wisdom
med pa	nonexistence; nonexistent; to not exist

mos gus	devotion
mos pa	conviction; belief; faith; preference; devotion
mos spyod	engagement through belief
mya ngan las 'das pa; 'das	nirvāṇa
myong ba	to feel; experience
dmigs rkyen	object condition
dmigs gtad	reference point
dmigs pa	object; reference point; techniques; observation
dmigs pa med pa; dmigs med	without an object; without a reference point; nonreferential state
dmigs pa'i rten; dmigs rten	focal support
dmigs pa'i yul; dmigs yul	object of concentration; focal object
dmigs rim	stages of meditation
rmugs pa	sluggishness
rmong se 'dug pa	mental darkness
smon pa'i byang chub sems	aspirational bodhichitta

ཙ

rtsa bral	free from a root
rtsa rlung thig le	nāḍī, prāṇa, and bindu
rtsa gsum	three nāḍīs
rtsal	expressive power
rtsal snang	appearances of the expressive power; expressive power
rtsal sbyang ba	to become proficient; to develop proficiency
rtsal rdzogs	to attain mastery

ཚ

tshang pa chen po'i gtsug rgyan gyi ting nge 'dzin	samādhi of the crown ornament of Mahābrahmā
tshang bug	opening of Brahmā
tshad med bzhi	four immeasurables
tshams med lnga	five acts of immediate consequence
tshul khrims	ethical conduct
tshogs	gaṇachakra
tshogs gnyis	two accumulations
tshogs drug	six sense consciousnesses; six senses
tshogs spyod	conduct in a crowd
tshogs lam	path of accumulation
tshogs lam bzhi gsum bcu gnyis	twelve factors (i.e., the three sets of four) of the path of accumulation
mtshang	vital point; key point; hidden flaw
mtshan nyid	defining characteristics; characteristics; qualifications
mtshan nyid theg pa	vehicle of characteristics
mtshan mar 'dzin pa; mtshan ma bzung ba	apprehension of characteristics
mtshan bzang po so gnyis	thirty-two excellent major marks
'tshang rgya ba	to awaken
'tshol ba	to search; to investigate; to seek; to discover

ཛ

mdzod spu	hair-tuft
'dzam bu gling	Jambudvīpa

'dzin pa	to fixate; to apprehend; the apprehension process; to perceive; to grasp; to take to be (something); to hold
'dzin med	without conceptual fixation; without fixation; without discrimination
rdzu 'phrul	magical powers
rdzogs chen	mahāsandhi
rdzogs rim	completion-stage meditation

ཞ

zhi gnas	shamatha
zhi byed	Pacification
zhu bde lhan skyes	connateness of melting bliss
zhe 'dod	striving
zhen pa	to fixate
zhen pa gsum	three attachments
zhen logs; zhen pa bzlog	revulsion; turn away from attachments; reverse one's attachment
gzhag thabs	way to rest
gzhan snang	what appears to others
gzhan 'phrul dbang byed	Controlling Others' Emanations
gzhan 'byor lnga	five opportunities [provided by] others
gzhi med	groundless
gzhi med; gzhi ma grub pa	without a basis; groundless
bzhugs tshul	mode of being; nature

ཟ

zad sar bskyal	brought to place of exhaustion

zab don	meaning of the profound
zab mo lta ba'i rgyud	lineage of the profound view
zin pa	to be guided (by a spiritual mentor)
zin pa	to settle; to rest; to control; to remain in; to hold
zin pa brtan par byed pa	stabilizing the settled [mind]
zung 'jug	union
zlog sgom	counteractive meditation
gzugs sku gnyis	two form kāyas
gzugs khams	form realm
gzugs khams gnas rigs bcu bdun	seventeen levels of the form realm
gzugs med skye mched mu bzhi	four spheres of the formless realm
gzung dran	mindfulness towards objects
gzung 'dzin	apprehended objects and apprehending subject; apprehended and apprehender
gzengs bstod pa	uplift [the mind]
gzer lnga	five nails
bzung dran	mindfulness towards objects
bzo bcos med pa	without fabrication

འ

'og 'gyu	undercurrents of thoughts
'og min	Akaniṣhṭha
'od gsal	luminosity

ཡ

yang dag dran pa	perfect mindfulness

yang dag pa'i don	true reality
yan lag bdun pa	seven-branch prayer
yid ches pa'i dad pa	confident faith
yin min	being something or not being something
yin lugs	fundamental state
yul med	without a trace; without being an object; the nonexistence of objects
yul yul can	object aspect and subject aspect
ye nas	from the beginning; primordially
ye shes	wisdom
ye shes lnga	five wisdoms
ye shor	fundamental deviation
yod pa	existence; existent; to exist
yon tan	excellent qualities; virtues; asset
yon tan brgya phrag bcu gnyis	twelve sets of one hundred excellent qualities

ར

rang gar; rang gar ma	freely; just as it is
rang gi sems de gzhi rtsa gcod pa	cut through a root or basis of mind
rang grol	self-liberation
rang ngo shes pa	to recognize; recognize the nature; self-recognized; recognize the essence [of one's mind]
rang ngos nas	in its own right
rang chas	natural attribute
rang stong	self-empty
rang dangs	self-clarified
rang snang	reflexive appearance
rang babs	settle into itself; naturally settled

rang 'byor lnga	five personal opportunities
rang rtsal	reflexive expressive power
rang zhal	very face; own nature; very nature
rang bzhin	nature; inherent nature
rang bzhin med pa; rang bzhin ma grub pa	lack of an inherent nature
rang bzhin lhan skyes	natural connateness
rang gzugs	natural forms
rang yan du	let be free
rang rig	reflexive awareness
rang lugs	own state; own nature
rang sa; rang mal	own place
rang sang rgyas	pratyekabuddha
rang sar bskyal	brought to its own place
rang sar zhog	to leave as they are
rig pa ngar dang ldan pa; rig pa ngar bskyed	intensified awareness
rig pa brtul zhugs	[yogic] discipline of awareness
rig pa; shes pa	awareness
rig 'dzin	vidyādhara
rim gyis pa	gradual type
rim gnyis	two stages
ro mnyam zung 'jug; zung 'jug ro mnyam	unified equal taste
rol pa	play
rlung bum can	vase breathing

ལ

la zla'i chos	the ultimate
lam rgyud lnga	five streams of being
lam lnga	five paths

lam du khyer; lam du slongs	take as the path; brought onto the path; incorporate as the path
las kyi phyag rgya	karmamudrā
las rgyu 'bras	karmic causes and results
las 'phro can	karmic continuity
las byed pa'i slob dpon	master for the ritual
lus kyi gzhag thabs	positioning of the body
lus gnad	essential points concerning the body; physical posture
longs sku	sambhogakāya

ཤ

shi ba'i 'od gsal	luminosity of death
shes pa	awareness; mind; attention
shes pa gtad	to direct one's attention; to focus one's attention
shes bya	objects of knowledge; objects
shes bya'i sgrib pa	obscuration regarding objects of knowledge
shes bzhin	alert; attentiveness
shes rab	knowledge; understanding
shor sa bzhi	four deviations
gshin rje	Yama
gshis	basic nature
gshis kyi gnas lugs	basic abiding nature
gshis kyi babs	basic state
gshis kyi yin lugs	basic fundamental state

ས

sa	bhūmi
sa bcu	ten bhūmis

sa bcu gcig pa	eleventh bhūmi
sa bcu'i khyad par gyi lam	special path of the ten bhūmis
sa gnon dang mnyam gzhag gi phyag rgya	earth-pressing and meditative-equipoise mudrās
sa 'og gi spyod pa'i ting nge 'dzin	samādhi experiencing below the earth
sa gsum	three levels [of existence]
sems kyi 'jog thabs	methods for placing the mind
sems nyid	mind-itself
sems nyid phyag rgya chen po	mahāmudrā of mind-itself
sems gnad	essential points concerning the mind
sems gnas par byed pa'i thabs dgu	nine methods for bringing the mind to rest
sems pa'i las	karma of intention
sems dpa' skyil krung	bodhisattva position
sems dpa' chen po	mahāsattva
sems spro ba	to generate thoughts; to scatter thoughts
sems tsam pa	Chittamātra
sems 'dzin pa; sems bzung ba	to concentrate
sems gzhag	to place one's attention
sems zin pa	to settle the mind
sems; yid; shes pa	mind
sems rang bzhin med pa	mind's nature is not inherently existent; mind lacks inherent existence; mind does not have a truly existent nature
so ma nyams pa	unimpaired freshness or basic state
so so yang dag par rig pa bzhi	four individual correct knowledges
so sor rang rig pa'i ye shes	reflexively aware wisdom itself
sor rtogs ye shes	discriminating wisdom
srid pa gsum	three states of [cyclic] existence
srid rtse	Pinnacle of Existence

srog rlung log pa	disorder of the life-force prāṇa
gsang sngags	Secret Mantra
gsang ste ston pa'i slob dpon	master for private matters
gsang spyod	secret conduct
gsal stong 'dzin med	clarity and emptiness, free from fixation
gsal dangs ngar dang bcas pa	sharp, lucid clarity
gsal ba	clarity; brilliance
bsam gtan	meditative concentration
bsam gtan gyi chos lnga	five-point posture of meditative concentration
bsam gtan bzhi	four concentrations
bsam pa'i las	karma due to intention
bsal bzhag	to eliminate or produce
bslab gsum	three trainings

ཧ

lhan cig skyes pa	connate
lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa	connate ignorance
lhan cig skyes sbyor	connate union
lhun grub	spontaneously present; spontaneous presence; to spontaneously exist
lhun grub kyi rang sa tsir gyis 'dzin pa	to directly take hold of the very place of spontaneous presence

ཨ

a 'thas	solidify
a 'thas kyi dran pa	mindfulness that solidifies
a'u khog stong	hollow emptiness

REFERENCE I

ENDNOTES

The following abbreviations have been used in the endnotes:

Khenchen Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche (KTGR)
Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche (DPR)
Alak Zenkar Rinpoche (AZR)
Āchārya Sherab Gyaltsen (ASG)
Āchārya Tenpa Gyaltsen Negi (ATGN)
Nges don rgya mtsho (NG) (*The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*)
sDom rtsa tshig (DT) (*The Summary Root Verses*)

1. The four dharmas (*chos bzhi*) of Gampopa:

   May my mind turn towards the dharma.
   May the dharma proceed on the path.
   May the path dispel delusion.
   May delusion dawn as wisdom.

2. *Thar pa rin po che'i rgyan* by Gampopa; chapter 2.
3. *Abhidharmasamuchchaya, Chos mngon pa kun las btus pa*, by Asaṅga.
4. NG, p 4b.3: *mi khom pa'i gnas brgyad kyi* ***nang nas*** is read as *mi khom pa'i gnas brgyad kyi* ***las***. (DPR)
5. *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva* (*Bodhicharyāvatāra, Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa*) by Shāntideva; chapter 4, verse 20.
6. Chapter 1, verse 4.
7. *Bodhisattvapiṭakasūtra, Byang chub sems pa'i sde snod kyi mdo.*
8. *Karuṇāpuṇḍarikasūtra, sNying rje pad ma kar po'i mdo.*
9. *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, chapter 7, verse 14.
10. *Sang rgyas phal po che.* Also known as the *Flower Ornament Sūtra.*

11. *Sūtra on the Ten Dharmas (Dashadharmakasūtra, 'Phag pa chos bcu pa'i mdo)*.
12. *Extensive Sport Sūtra (Lalitavistarasūtra, rGya cher rol pa'i mdo)*.
13. *Ratnāvalī, Rin chen phreng ba*, by Nāgārjuna, verse 6.
14. *Ratnolkānāmadhāraṇīsūtra, dKon mchog ta la la*.
15. *Udānavarga, Ched du brjod pa'i tshoms*, compiled by Dharmatrāta; chapter 1, verse 22.
16. Ibid., chapter 1, verse 3.
17. *Lalitavistarasūtra, rGya cher rol pa'i mdo*.
18. Chapter 1, verses 9 and 10.
19. Ibid., chapter 1, verse 41.
20. *Abhidharmakoshakārikā, Chos mngon pa'i mdzod*, by Vasubhandu; chapter 3.
21. NG, p. 8b.6: *gsod sar khrid pa'i* **brtson** should be *gsod sar khrid pa'i* **btson**. Note that *rtson* (prison) is spelled incorrectly as *brtson* throughout NG. (AZR and DPR)
22. NG, p. 8b.6: *mi sdod* **bsdis** *sar* should be *mi sdod* **bsdig** *sar*. (AZR)
23. *Mahāsannipātaratnaketudhāraṇī, 'Dus pa rin po che tog*.
24. *'Phags pa ljon shing gi mdo*.
25. Chapter 1, verse 14.
26. NG, p. 9.3: *drung du* **bsnyen** *pa* should be *drung du* **bsnyeg** *pa*. (AZR)
27. *Suhṛillekha, bShes pa'i spring yig*, by Nāgārjuna.
28. Chapter 3, verse 278.
29. Chapter 2, verse 32.
30. Chapter 2, verse 58.
31. Chapter 2, verse 39.
32. Chapter 2, verses 40 and 41.
33. NG, p. 10.6: **gshes** *ci phan* should be **bshes** *ci phan*. (AZR)
34. NG, p. 11b.6: *shi* **cha** *chos ma gtogs* should be *shi* **tshe** *chos ma gtogs*. (AZR)
35. *Karmashatakasūtra, mDo sde las brgya pa*, by Guṇaprabha.
36. Chapter 4.
37. Ibid., chapter 4.
38. *Precious Garland*, chapter 1, verses 14-16.
39. Chapter 1, verses 20 and 21.

40. NG, p. 13.3: **bud** *ba dag* should be **bde** *ba dag*. (AZR)
41. Ibid., verse 229.
42. *Smṛityupasthāna, Dran pa nye bar gzhag pa chung ba*.
43. Verse 24.
44. NG, p. 13b.5: *de nyid* **kyi** *zin* should be *de nyid* **kyis** *zin*. (AZR)
45. *Surataparipṛichchhāsūtra, Des pas zhus pa'i mdo*.
46. Chapter 28, verse 26.
47. *Abhidharmakoshaṭikā, Chos mngon pa'i mdzod 'grel bshad*, by Rājaputra Yashomitra.
48. NG, p. 17.1: **g.yen** *pa 'phrug pa* should be **g.yan** *pa 'phrug pa*. (AZR)
49. Chapter 3.
50. Ibid., Chapter 3.
51. Chapter 3.
52. Ibid., chapter 3.
53. Ibid., chapter 3.
54. *Pitāputrasamāgamanasūtra, Yab sras mjal ba'i mdo*.
55. *Uttaratantra, rGyud bla ma*, by Maitreya and Asaṅga; verse 21.
56. *Sāgaramatiparipṛichchhāsūtra, bLo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa'i mdo*.
57. *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra, mDo sde myang 'das*.
58. *Sūtrālaṃkāra, mDo sde rgyan*, by Maitreya and Asaṅga; *chapter* 10, verse 8.
59. The full quotation is:

> In the Buddha, dharma, and supreme assembly,
> I take refuge until awakening.
> Through the merit of generosity and the others,
> May I attain buddhahood in order to benefit beings.

60. The full quotation is:

> Until attaining the essence of awakening,
> I take refuge in the buddhas.
> Likewise, I take refuge in
> The dharma and the assembly of bodhisattvas.

61. The full quotation is:

> May all sentient beings have happiness and the causes of happiness.

May they be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.
May they never be separated from the genuine happiness that is free from suffering.
May they abide in great equanimity, which is free from prejudice, attachment, and aggression.

62. NG, p. 24.6: *dge ba 'di yis myur bdag* should be *dge ba 'di yis myur* ***du*** *bdag.*

63. *Saṃdhinirmochanasūtra, dGongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i mdo.*

64. *Abhisamayālaṃkāra, mNgon rtogs rgyan,* by Maitreya and Asaṅga; chapter 1, verse 14.

65. *Sañchayagāthāprajñāpāramitāsūtra, Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa sdud pa.*

66. *Ornament for Clear Realization,* chapter 1, verses 15 and 16. The full quotation is:

Earth, gold, moon, fire,
Treasure, jewel mine, ocean,
Vajra, mountain, medicine, spiritual mentor,
Wish-fulfilling jewel, sun, song,
King, treasury, highway,
Steed, spring-fed pool,
Lute, river, and cloud
Are the twenty-two types.

67. Chapter 5, verse 2.

68. This discusses the correspondence between the twenty-two similes presented in the quotation from the *Ornament for Clear Realization* and the paths and bhūmis.

Similes in the *Ornament for Clear Realization*	Correspondence to the bhūmis or paths
1-3: Earth, gold, and the moon	Bhūmi of a beginner [the three levels of the path of accumulation]
4: Fire	Path of preparation
5-14: A treasure, a jewel mine, an ocean, a vajra, a mountain, medicine, a spiritual mentor, a wish-fulfilling jewel, the sun, and a song	The ten bhūmis
15-19: A king, a treasury, a highway, a steed, and a spring-fed pool	The special paths of the ten bhūmis: the three pure bhūmis (8-10)
20-22: A lute, a river, and a cloud	The bhūmi of buddhahood

69. This presents the correspondence between the bhūmis and the four aspects of bodhichitta mentioned in the quotation from the *Ornament for the Sūtras.*

Ornament for the Sūtras	Bhūmis
Engagement through belief	Bhūmi of a beginner
Pure altruistic attitude	Seven impure bhūmis (1-7)
Maturation	Three pure bhūmis (8-10)
Relinquishment of obscurations	Buddhahood

70. NG, p. 25b.5: ***mnyen*** *pa lta bu* should be ***mnyan*** *pa lta bu.* (AZR)

71. Chapter 1, verse 15.

72. Chapter 1, verse 16.

73. Chapter 5, verse 3.

74. *Bhadracharyāpraṇidhāna, bZang spyod smon lam,* verse 46.

75. Chapter 5, verse 7.

76. Ibid., chapter 5, verse 8.

77. NG, p. 26b.2: *chos la mi* ***rtogs*** should be *chos la mi* ***rtog.*** (AZR)

78. *Bodhipathapradīpa, Byang chub lam gyi sgron ma,* by Atīsha.

79. *Bodhisattavabhūmi, Byang chub sems dpa'i sa,* by Asaṅga.

80. *Shikṣhāsamuchchaya, bsLab pa kun las btus pa,* by Shāntideva.

81. The full quotation is:

Until attaining the essence of awakening,
I take refuge in the buddhas.
Likewise, I take refuge in
The dharma and the assembly of bodhisattvas.

Just as the previous sugatas
Gave rise to bodhichitta
And dwelt successively

In the trainings of a bodhisattva,

Likewise, for the welfare of all beings,
I will generate bodhichitta
And progress successively
Through those trainings.

The last two verses are from *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, chapter 3, verses 23 and 24.

82. *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, chapter 3, verses 26 and 27.

83. Ibid., chapter 3, verse 34.

84. *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, chapter 5, verse 100.

85. Chapter 10.

86. Chapter 11.

87. *Shrīdattagṛihapatiparipṛichchhāsūtra, dPal byin gyis zhus pa'i mdo.*

88. Chapter 1, verse 9.

89. Ibid., chapter 1, verse 19 (The first line here is the first line of verse 18).

90. Ibid., chapter 4, verse 4.

91. Chapter 4.

92. Chapter 2, verse 62.

93. NG, p. 30b.5: *rjes su mi* ***'drang*** should be *rjes su mi* ***'brang***. (AZR)

94. Chapter 2, verse 34.

95. Chapter 2, verse 32.

96. Ibid., chapter 2, verse 33.

97. *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra, gSer 'od dam pa'i mdo.*

98. *Engaging in the Conduct of a Bodhisattva*, chapter 2, verse 65.

99. *Sūkarikāvadāna, Phag mo'i rtogs brjod.*

100. Chapter 1, verse 13.

101. The full mantra is:

OṂ VAJRASATTVA SAMAYAM ANUPĀLAYA
VAJRASATTVA TVENOPATIṢHṬHA DṚIḌHO ME BHAVA
SUTOṢHYO ME BHAVA SUPOṢHYO ME BHAVA
ANURAKTO ME BHAVA SARVA SIDDHIṂ ME
PRAYACCHA SARVA KARMASU CHA ME CHITTAṂ
SHREYAḤ KURU HŪṂ HA HA HA HA HOḤ BHAGAVAN
SARVA TATHĀGATA VAJRA MĀ ME MUÑCHA VAJRĪ
BHAVA MAHĀSAMAYASATTVA ĀḤ

102. NG, p. 33b.4: *thugs rje chen* ***po*** *bdag nyid can* should be *thugs rje chen* ***po'i*** *bdag nyid can.* (AZR)

103. *Madhyamakāvatāra, dbU ma la 'jug pa,* by Chandrakīrti.

104. Chapter 3, verse 12.

105. *Ornament for the Sūtras,* chapter 19, verse 40.

106. Ibid., chapter 5, verse 8.

107. *Pañchakrama, Rim pa lnga pa,* by Nāgārjuna.

108. *Shrīsaṃbhavavimokṣha, dPal 'byung gi rnam thar.*

109. *Aṣhṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra, Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa brgyad stong pa'i mdo.*

110. NG, p. 35b.1: *rdzogs par* ***chong*** *rgya'o* should be *rdzogs par* ***tshang*** *rgya'o.* (AZR)

111. NG, p.35b.2: *ku* ***sa le*** should be *ku* ***sa' li*** according to the *Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary*.

112. NG, p. 35b.3: *nam mkhar rgyangs kyis* ***myong*** should be *nam mkhar rgyangs kyis* ***byong***. (AZR)

113. NG, p. 35b.3: ***ga las*** *gri gug* should be ***g.yas*** *gri gug.* (AZR)

114. NG, p. 35b.5: KUṆLI should be KUṆḌALI. (AZR)

115. The full mantra is:

OṂ SVABHĀVA SHUDDHĀḤ SARVA DHARMĀḤ
SVABHĀVA SHUDDHO 'HAṂ

116. The full offering mantra is:

OṂ VAJRA ARGHAṂ ĀḤ HŪṂ
OṂ VAJRA PĀDYAṂ ĀḤ HŪṂ
OṂ VAJRA PUṢHPE ĀḤ HŪṂ
OṂ VAJRA DHŪPE ĀḤ HŪṂ
OṂ VAJRA ĀLOKE ĀḤ HŪṂ
OṂ VAJRA GHANDE ĀḤ HŪṂ
OṂ VAJRA NAIVEDYE ĀḤ HŪṂ
OṂ VAJRA SHABDA ĀḤ HŪṂ

117. NG, p. 36.6: *gzugs dam pa* should be *gzugs* ***mdzes*** *dam pa.* (AZR)

118. The SAMBHARA mantra is:

NAMO SARVA TATHĀGATA AVALOKITE OṂ
SAMBHARA SAMBHARA HŪṂ.

The names of the tathāgatas are the four lines of homage beginning with, "I pay homage to the tathāgata Many Jewels. . . ."

119. NG, p. 36b.5: *pha ma'i drin* ***len*** should be *pha ma'i drin* ***lan***. (AZR)

120. The full quotation is:

Spirits who have assembled here,
Spirits who roam under the earth,
Those who dwell on the earth,
And those who roam above the earth:
Be gladdened and return
To your own abodes.
SARVA BHŪTA GACCHA

121. NG, p.36b.6: *ku* ***sa la*** should be *ku* ***sa' li*** according to the *Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary*.

122. NG, p. 37.5: ***mams*** *pa can* should be ***mam*** *pa can*. (AZR)

123. NG, p. 37b. 3: *lag tu* ***thog*** should be *lag tu* ***thogs***. (AZR)

124. Set the protection for the maṇḍala (*maṇḍal bsrung ba bzhag*): To place the rice or other offering substances around the edge of the maṇḍala to represent the iron mountains. (DPR)

125. Cleanse and purify (*bsang sbyang*): Refers to the mantras used for cleansing and purification, which are the AMṚITA and SVABHĀVA mantras, according to *The Torch of Certainty* (*Nges don sgron me*) by Jamgön Lodrö Thaye.

126. The long maṇḍala offering is:

OṂ VAJRA BHŪMI ĀḤ HŪṂ The pure ground is the earth of vajra-nature. OṂ VAJRA REKHE ĀḤ HŪṂ. The outer circular iron mountain wall surrounds this completely. In the center is the supreme Mount Meru, the king of mountains. In the east, Pūrvavideha. In the south, Jambudvīpa. In the west, Aparagodānīya. In the north, Uttarakuru. Beside them are Deha and Videha, Chāmara and Aparachāmara, Shāṭhā and Uttaramantriṇa, Kurava and Kaurava. The jewel mountain, the wish-fulfilling trees, the wish-fulfilling cows, the crops that need no cultivation, the precious wheel, the precious gem, the precious queen, the precious minister, the precious elephant, the precious horse, the precious general, the treasure vase, the goddess of grace, the goddess of garlands, the goddess of song, the goddess of dance, the goddess of flowers, the goddess of incense, the goddess of light, the goddess of perfume, the sun, the moon, the precious umbrella, the royal banner victorious in all directions, and, in the center, the abundant wealth of gods and humans in its entirety—all this is arranged in numbers transcending the number of atoms in the infinite ocean [of world systems]. I offer this to the gurus, yidams, buddhas, bodhisattvas, ḍākas, ḍākinīs, dharma protectors, and guardians. Please accept it through your compassion for the benefit of beings. Having accepted it, please grant your blessing.

127. The short maṇḍala offering is:

The earth is anointed with perfumed water and covered with flowers,
Adorned with Mount Meru, the four continents, the sun, and the moon.
Imagining this as the buddha realms, I offer it—
May all beings experience the pure realms.

128. The full quotation is:

Having offered this excellent and pleasing maṇḍala,
May obstacles to the path of awakening not arise;
May I realize the mind of the sugatas of the three times;
May I neither be deluded in existence nor abide in peace;
And may all beings, who equal the extent of space, be liberated.

129. The full quotation is:

To the gurus and vajra masters,
Dwelling in the ten directions and three times,
Yidam deities with their retinues,
And the sugatas of the three times—

To these superior ones, I offer with devotion
The four continents and Mount Meru,
And hundreds of millions of the four continents,
Hundreds of billions and hundreds of millions,
All gathered into this one maṇḍala.

Please accept it through your compassion and love.
Having accepted it, please grant your blessings.
OṂ MAṆḌALA PŪJA MEGHA SAMUDRA SPHARAṆA SAMAYE ĀḤ HŪṂ

Having offered this excellent and pleasing maṇḍala,
May obstacles to the path of awakening not arise;

May I realize the mind of the sugatas of the three times;
May I neither be deluded in existence nor abide in peace;
And may all beings, who equal the extent of space, be liberated.

130. The full quotation is:

I offer the body, wealth, and roots of virtue of myself and all infinite sentient beings to the gurus and the precious three jewels. May the supreme intentions of the guru and three jewels be completely fulfilled.

By giving all the merit present here to all sentient beings of six classes, may they be liberated and freed from their respective sufferings and faults in the six states. Finally, may they swiftly attain the precious level of omniscient buddhahood.

131. The full quotation is:

All-knowing and all-seeing deities, please hear us.
Throughout beginningless time,
Under the influence of the three poisons, with our body, speech, and mind
We have transgressed the three vows and the words of the Victorious One.
We admit and confess all the actions we have done that are faults, downfalls, or evil.
We will not repeat them and may we not experience [their results].

We pay homage to the three precious jewels.
We dedicate to great, unsurpassable awakening
All this virtue in particular,
As well as all the virtue—defiled, undefiled, and unified—
Accumulated in the three times by all sentient beings.
May all beings achieve omniscience.

132. A general confession (*spyi bshags*) is as follows:

Great guru vajra-holder, buddhas and bodhisattvas residing in the ten directions, and noble Great Compassionate One, please hear me. I, by the name of so-and-so, throughout my lives in beginningless saṃsāra up until now, under the influence of the mental afflictions of passion, aggression, and stupidity, have, with my body, speech, and mind, done negative actions and nonvirtuous actions; committed the five acts of immediate consequence and the five secondary acts of immediate consequence; have transgressed the vows of individual liberation; have transgressed the trainings of a bodhisattva; have transgressed the samayas of Secret Mantra; have harmed the three jewels; have rejected the genuine dharma; have slandered the noble saṅgha; have not respected my parents; have not respected the preceptor and master; have not respected friends with worthy conduct. In brief, whatever faults and downfalls are hindrances to higher rebirths and liberation and are causes of saṃsāra and the lower states, I admit and confess all in the presence of the great guru vajra-holder, the buddhas and bodhisattvas residing in the ten directions, and the noble Great Compassionate One. I do not conceal them nor hide them. If I admit and confess in this way, I will abide in a state of bliss. If I do not admit and confess, this will not occur.

133. *Vinayasūtra, 'Dul ba mdo rtsa ba* by Guṇaprabha.

134. *Three Hundred Stanzas on the Shramaṇera* (*Mūlasarvāstivādi-shrāmaṇerakārikā, gSum brgya pa*) by Shakyaprabha.

135. Chapter 5, verse 102.

136. *Ornament for the Sūtras*, chapter 18, verse 11.

137. Ibid., chapter 13, verse 5.

138. Ibid., chapter 13, verse 6.

139. Tib. *slob dpon zla ba*: This is assumed to be *slob dpon zla ba grags pa*, Chandrakīrti. (DPR)

140. *Dus 'khor*.

141. *Paramārthasevan, Don dam bsnyen pa* by Puṇḍarika.

142. Chapter 1, verse 32.

143. The full quotation is:

On the snow mountain of the guru's four kāyas
If the sun of devotion does not shine,
The streams of blessing will not flow—
Child, strive [to develop] devotion.

144. Verse 153.

145. *Ba tshwa can gyi chu klung gi mdo.*

146. *brTag gnyis,* also known as the *Hevajra Tantra.* Part I, chapter 8, verse 34.

147. *Dam tshig bkod pa.*

148. *A ti bkod pa chen po rgyud.*

149. The full quotation is:

> The guru is the buddha, the guru is the dharma,
> The guru is also the saṅgha.
> The guru is the creator of all.
> I pay homage to the guru.

150. The full quotation is:

> Through whose kindness great bliss itself
> Arises instantly—
> Guru, with a jewel-like form,
> Vajra-holder, I bow down at your lotus feet.

151. The full quotation is:

> Prior to the guru
> There was not even the name "buddha."
> Even the thousand divine ones of this fortunate aeon
> Appear through relying upon gurus.

152. *Ornament for the Sūtras,* chapter 18, verse 12.

153. NG, p. 46b.5: ***dngos** dang longs spyod* should be ***lus** dang longs spyod.*

154. This line is missing from NG, p. 47.5.

155. The full quotation is:

> Glorious, precious root guru
> Who is seated on a lotus and moon above my head,
> Please accept me through your great kindness,
> And bestow upon me the siddhis of body, speech, and mind.

156. NG, p. 48b.1: *mi zug pa* seems to be a spelling mistake and is unidentifiable. (AZR and DPR)

157. NG, p. 49.4: *'chi ba'i **nang** par* should be *'chi ba'i **nangs** par.* (AZR)

158. NG, p. 49b.1: *kha **ston*** should be *kha **ton**.* (AZR)

159. The four "Mother" verses (*ma nam bzhi skor*) are:

> My mother sentient beings, who equal the extent of space, supplicate the guru, the precious buddha. My mother sentient beings, who equal the extent of space, supplicate the guru, the all-pervasive dharmakāya. My mother sentient beings, who equal the extent of space, supplicate the guru, the sambhogakāya of great bliss. My mother sentient beings, who equal the extent of space, supplicate the guru, the compassionate nirmāṇakāya.

160. *Vajramālātantra, rDo rje phreng ba'i rgyud.*

161. *Kye rdo rje.* Also known as the *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra].* Part I, chapter 1, verse 12.

162. *Sambuti.*

163. *Vinayāgama, 'Dul ba lung.*

164. NG, p. 54b.6: *chu **blung*** should be *chu **rlung**.* (AZR)

165. NG, p. 57.1: *da **ltar** ba* should be *da **lta** ba.* (AZR)

166. This quotation seems to be from Saraha and is also found on page 101.

167. *Dohā for the People (dMangs do)* by Saraha, verse 45.

168. *Radiant Jewel Lamp (Rin chen gsal ba'i sgron me).*

169. NG, p. 58b.5: *'das pa'i rjes mi **bsnyag*** should be *'das pa'i rjes mi **bsnyeg**.* (AZR)

170. NG, p. 60b.2: ***tshur** du bsdad* should be ***tshul** du bsdad.* (AZR)

171. NG, p. 60b.6: ***mi 'dod pa*** should be omitted in *sgom snying yang yang **'dod pa** dang mi 'dod pa.* (AZR)

172. NG, p. 61.3: *zhi gnas **kyi** mgo non* should read *zhi gnas **kyis** mgo non.* (DPR)

173. NG, p. 61b.4: ***shangs** len byas* should be ***spang** len byas.* (KTGR and DPR)

174. *Dohā for the People,* verse 46.

175. NG, p. 63.3: *gzhan **pas*** should be *gzhan **las**.* (AZR)

176. *Ganges Mahāmudrā* (*Mahāmudropadesha, Phyag chen gang ga ma* or *Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag*).

177. Ibid.

178. Ibid.: *rang byung rang zhi chu yi **rba rlabs** 'dra.* NG, p. 63b.2: *rang byung rang zhi chu yi **pa tra** 'dra.*

179. Ibid.

180. *Sems nyid ngal bso* by Longchen Rabjampa.

181. *Phyag chen ga'u ma.*

182. NG, p. 64b.1: it is assumed that *dang* ***nga'i*** *sngon 'gro* should be *dang* ***po'i*** *sngon 'gro* since an almost identical phrase appears on 64.4. (DPR)

183. NG, p. 64. 3: *gang* ***gis*** *dus su* should be *gang* ***gi*** *dus su*. (AZR)

184. NG, p. 65b.2: *mi mthong* ***ba'ng*** should be *mi mthong* ***ba'm***. (DPR)

185. NG, p. 65b.4: ***chon*** *ne bzhag* should be ***tsen*** *ne bzhag*. (DPR)

186. *Ganges Mahāmudrā.*

187. NG, p. 66.2 ***grod*** *na* should be ***glod*** *na*. (AZR)

188. NG, p. 66b.1: ***du*** *ci zhig tsa na* should be ***dus*** *ci zhig tsa na*. (KTGR and DPR)

189. NG, p. 66b.1: ***bril*** *gyis 'char* should be ***hril*** *gyis 'char.* (KTGR)

190. NG, p. 66b.5: *rgya* ***bkyed*** *la zhog* should be *rgya* ***bskyed*** *la zhog*. (AZR, DPR)

191. NG, p. 66b.6: ***phyod*** *de zhog* should be ***phyad*** *de zhog.* (KTGR and DPR)

192. *Ganges Mahāmudrā.*

193. Ibid.

194. Ibid.: ***spang*** *blang med* ***pa'i*** *snang srid phyag* ***rgya che***. NG, p. 67.4: ***spong*** *blang med* ***na*** *snang srid phyag* ***rgyar grol***.

195. Ibid.: *kun gzhi skye ba med pas bag chags sgrib g.yogs* ***sangs***. NG, p. 67.6: *kun gzhi skye ba med pas bag chags sgrib g.yogs* ***bral***.

196. *Samādhirājasūtra, Ting nge 'dzin rgyal po'i mdo.*

197. NG, p. 68b.4 *rdo rje skyil* ***grung*** should be *rdo rje skyil* ***krung***. (AZR)

198. NG, p. 70.5: *khyung* ***rnam*** *'phang gcod pa* should be *khyung* ***gnam*** *'phang gcod pa*. (AZR)

199. NG, p. 72.2: *ma* in *bogs 'don lugs* ***ma*** *ston pa* is unnecessary. (DPR)

200. NG, p. 72b.4: ***log*** *gi phyogs* should be ***'og*** *gi phyogs*. (DPR)

201. NG, p. 73b.6: ***len*** *pa yin* should be ***lan*** *pa yin*. (AZR)

202. NG, p. 74.3: ***byab*** *par bsgom* should read ***btab*** *par bsgom*. (KTGR)

203. *Ganges Mahāmudrā.*

204. Ibid.: *'dul ba mdo sde* ***sde snod sna tshogs kyi***. NG, p. 75.2: *'dul ba mdo sde* ***mngon pa la sogs pa***.

205. Part II, chapter 2, verse 51.

206. NG, p. 77.4: *dmigs pa gang* ***rig gcig*** *la* ***krim*** should be *dmigs pa gang* ***rigs shig*** *la* ***grim***. (AZR)

207. NG, p. 78.4: ***ri*** *shi zhes brjod* should be ***re*** *shi zhes brjod*. (AZR)

208. NG, p. 78b.1: *de la* ***gnyugs bsings*** should read *de la* ***gnyug bsrings***. (DPR)

209. NG, p. 78b.4: *de* ***ting*** *pa* should be *de* ***rting*** *pa*. (AZR)

210. NG, p. 79.5: *rtsol bar* ***seng*** should be *rtsol bar* ***song***. (DPR)

211. NG, p. 79b.5: *de 'dra* ***tshe*** should be *de 'dra* ***tsho***. (AZR)

212. NG, 79b.6: ***lun*** *rgyang ba* should be ***yun*** *rgyang ba*. (DPR)

213. NG, p. 82.5: *ngo bo ci bu'i tshul* should be *ngo bo ci* ***lta*** *bu'i tshul*. (AZR)

214. NG, p. 84.1 *rtsar mi* ***btang*** should be *rtsar mi* ***gtang***. (AZR)

215. *Dohā for the People*, verse 101.

216. NG, p. 85.2: *zhog* ***las*** *rang la ltos dang* should read *zhog* ***la*** *rang la ltos dang*. (KTGR)

217. NG p. 85.5: *tshig de* ***zung*** *mi thub* should be *tshig de* ***gzung*** *mi thub*. (AZR)

218. *Highest Continuum*, verse 154.

219. *Highest Continuum*, verse 154.

220. NG, p. 89b.6: *sngar* ***mi rtog*** *pa'i steng du sgom ma shes pa* (previously, you did not know how to meditate on nonconceptuality) is read as *sngar* ***rtog*** *pa'i steng du sgom ma shes pa*. (DPR)

221. NG, p. 90.4: *med du mi rung bar* ***blte*** should be *med du mi rung bar* ***blta***. (AZR)

222. Part II, chapter 4, verse 36.

223. NG p. 93.6: *chos* ***no mad*** should be *chos* ***ni med***. (KTGR)

224. *Vajrapañjara, rDo rje gur.*

225. *Dohā for the People*, verse 34.

226. *Laṅkāvatārasūtra, Lang kar gshegs pa'i mdo.*

227. Chapter 5, verses 7 and 8.

228. NG, p. 96.5: ***sems*** *bem shes dang* should be *bem shes dang*. (KTGR and AZR)

229. NG, p. 97b.2: *de* ***nyid*** *de nyid dang gzhan du rjod* reads better as *de gnyis de nyid dang gzhan du rjod. De nyid dang gzhan* means *gcig dang tha dad*. (KTGR and DPR)

230. NG, p. 99b.3: *sgo* ***la'i*** *rnam shes* should be *sgo* ***lnga'i*** *rnam shes*. (KTGR and AZR)

231. *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra (Prajñāhṛidaya, Shes rab snying po)*.

232. *Phyag chen sgros 'bum.*

233. *Drishtisamkshipta, lTa ba mdor bsdus,* by Nāropa.

234. *Jñānasāgaratantra, Ye shes rgya mtsho'i rgyud.*

235. *Ganges Mahāmudrā.*

236. Ibid.: *dkar nag dag gis* **gos shing** *'gyur ba med.* NG, p. 103b.3: *dkar nag dag gis* **ma gos** *'gyur ba med.*

237. *Ganges Mahāmudrā.*

238. Ibid.: *'di* **'drar** *grub ces tha snyad gdags gzhi med.* NG, p. 103b.5: **brjod pas** *'di* **'dra** *grub ces tha snyad gdags gzhi med.*

239. Ibid.: **de ltar** *sems kyi rang bzhin gdod nas nam mkha' 'dra.* NG, p. 103b.5: *sems kyi rang bzhin gdod nas nam mkha' 'dra.*

240. Ibid.

241. NG, p. 104.1: *sgom du med* **kyi** should be *sgom du med* **kyis**. (KTGR and DPR)

242. NG, p.105.4: **rtogs** *pa ngos zin* should be **rtog** *pa ngos zin.* (DPR)

243. *Samvarodayatantra, sDom 'byung.*

244. NG, p. 106.4: *'gro* **la** *rang bzhin* can be read as *'gro* **ba'i** *rang bzhin.* (KTGR and DPR)

245. *Prajñānāma-mūlamadhyamakakārikā, rTsa ba shes rab,* by Nāgārjuna; chapter 15, verse 10.

246. This is the first line of the opening verses of the *Fundamental Treatise Called "Wisdom."* The full quotation is:

> I prostrate to the perfect Buddha,
> The best of teachers, who taught that
> What arises dependently
> Has no cessation, no arising,
> No annihilation, no permanence,
> No coming, no going,
> No difference, no sameness;
> Is free from elaborations, and is complete peace.

247. *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra],* part II, chapter 4, verse 77.

248. NG, p. 86.5: *nyams su* **myong** *nas* should be *nyams su* **myangs** *nas.* (AZR)

249. *Dohā for the People,* verse 76.

250. *Reciting the Names of Mañjushrī Tantra* (*Mañjushrīnāmasamgīti, 'Jam dpal mtshan brjod*). Chapter 8, verse 10, line 2.

251. *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra],* part II, chapter 4, verse 77.

252. *Atyayajñānasūtra, 'Da' ka ye shes mdo.*

253. *Gandavyūhasūtra, sDong bu bkod pa'i mdo.*

254. NG, p. 111b.3: *sgom* **'phros** *gshin pa bya'o* should be *sgom* **'phro** *gshin pa bya'o.* (AZR)

255. NG, p. 111b.4: *rtogs pa'i shugs* **kyi** *nyams skye bar byed* should be *rtogs pa'i shugs* **kyis** *nyams skye bar byed.* (KTGR)

256. NG, p. 112.6: **gnyan** *gyi rtog pa* should be **gnyen** *gyi rtog pa.* (AZR)

257. NG, p. 113.3: **rtog** *pa shor ba* should be **rtogs** *pa shor ba.* (DPR)

258. NG, p. 115b.2: *stong nyid* **gnyan** *por shor ba* should be *stong nyid* **gnyen** *por shor ba.* (AZR)

259. NG, p. 115.4: *rnam rtog gi* **gnyan** *por* should be *rnam rtog gi* **gnyen** *por.* (AZR)

260. *Buddhāvatamsaka Sūtra.*

261. NG, p. 118.6: **gizhi** *gnas kyis* should be **zhi** *gnas kyis.* (AZR)

262. Chapter 24, verse 11.

263. NG, p. 120.5: **rtogs** *pas byed pa* should be **rtog** *pas byed pa.* (KTGR)

264. NG, p. 122.6: **gzir** *lnga* is read as **gzer** *lnga.* (KTGR and DPR)

265. NG, p. 122b.1: *rnam par* **rtogs** should be *rnam par* **rtog.** (AZR)

266. See Teaching session 36, page 127.

267. NG, p. 123b.2: *bde ba* **shes** *chung* should be *bde ba* **shas** *chung.* (AZR)

268. NG, p. 127b.4: *stong pa yin* **yang** is read as *stong pa* **yin na.** (KTGR)

269. NG, p. 128.3: *'khrul pa dang* **rtogs pa** should be *'khrul pa dang* **rtog pa.** (KTGR and AZR)

270. NG, p. 128.4: *gnyid* **kyis** *dran 'dun nyams* should be *gnyid* **kyi** *dran 'dun nyams.* (KTGR and DPR)

271. NG, p. 128.4: **'gro ba'ng** *'byung* should be **'khrul pa** *'byung.* (KTGR)

272. NG, p. 129.4: *snang dmigs stong* **pa** is read as *snang dmigs stong* **dmigs.** (KTGR)

273. NG, p. 131.2: *spang bya'i lhag rol* should be *spang bya'i lhag ro.* (AZR)

274. NG, p. 133b.6: *gsal stong 'dra* should be *gsal stong* **nam mkha'** *'dra.* (KTGR)

275. NG, p. 136.1: Reading *chos* (dharma; qualities) as referring to

mthong lam (the path of seeing). (KTGR and DPR)

276. Götsangpa's *Profound Explanations on the Four Yogas* (*rJe rgod tshang pa'i rnal 'byor bzhi'i zab 'brel*).

277. NG, p. 139b.6: ***spyod** ldan dag* should be ***dpyod** ldan dag*. (DPR and AZR)

278. When this section is first presented in the outline (NG, p. 143.1) it is called "the benefits of the practice" (*nyams su blangs ba'i phan yon*), however in the presentation of the section (NG, p. 160.1) it is called "the way the result manifests from practice" (*nyams su blangs bas 'bras bu ji ltar 'byung ba*). DPR chose to use the latter because it seems to be the more appropriate heading.

279. NG, p. 143b.3: *blo **yi** byar ma btub* is read as *blo **yis** byar ma btub*. (KTGR)

280. NG, p. 147b.4: *zhabs **thog** tu srog gtong* should be *zhabs **tog** tu srog gtong*. (AZR)

281. *Mi la ras pa'i rnam mgur*, p. 637 (Qinghai Press edition).

282. NG, p. 149.6: *man ngag yin **gyi*** is read as *man ngag yin **gyis***. (KTGR)

283. *Ganges Mahāmudrā.*

284. NG, p.150b.2: *nam 'phang **spyod** pa* should be *nam 'phang **gcod** pa*. (AZR)

285. NG, p. 150b.2: ***'zangs** ma'i sris* should be ***mzangs** ma'i sris*. (AZR)

286. NG, p. 151b.5: *ma chad **par** du zhen rgyu med* is read as *ma chad **bar** du zhan rgyu med*. (KTGR and DPR)

287. *Mahāmudrātilaka, Phyag chen thig le'i rgyud.*

288. *Yi ge bzhi pa.*

289. *sGom ma mo chen mo.*

290. NG, 155b.1: ***lda'** ba med* should be ***'da'** ba med*. (AZR)

291. *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra]*, part I, chapter 10, verse 39. In the *Two-Part [Hevajra Tantra]* the verse reads:

> *lhan cig skyes pas gang skyes pa*
> *lhan cig skyes par de brjod bya*
> *rang bzhin lhan cig skyes zhes brjod*
> *rnam pa thams cad sdom pa gcig*

NG, 155b.3-4: the third line reads: *rang bzhin lhan cig skyes pa nyid.*

292. *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga, Sang rgyas mnyam sbyor gyi rgyud.*

293. *dPal gsang ba spyod pa'i rgyud.*

294. Part I, chapter 10, verse 39. NG, p. 157b.4: the quotation is missing the second line. See note 281.

295. NG, p. 158b.6: ***bsngags so** gsung* should be ***sngags su** gsung*. (KTGR)

296. NG, 163b.1: ***rgyal na** gsal stong* should be ***rgya yan** gsal stong*. (KTGR)

297. NG, p. 163b.5: *don **de** bden pa* should be *don **dam** bden pa*. (AZR)

298. DT, p. 1b.3: ***dgos su** 'gro ba'i tshe* should be ***sgos su** 'gro ba'i tshe*. (DPR)

299. DT, p. 1b.4: *mi **bdu** bar* should be *mi **'du** bar*. (DPR)

300. DT, p. 1b.5: ***btsun** pas byang chub bsgrub* should be ***brtson** pas byang chub bsgrub*. (DPR)

301. DT, p. 2.3: *dngos 'byor **yig** sprul* should be *dngos 'byor **yid** sprul*. (DPR)

302. DT, p. 3.1: ***bzhi** rtsa bcad* should be ***gzhi** rtsa bcad*. (DPR)

303. DT, p. 3.7: *gnyis **med*** should be *gnyis **pa***. (DPR)

304. DT, p. 3b.1: *rje rtsal sbyong **phyogs** 'don* should be *rje rtsal sbyong **bogs** 'don*. (DPR)

305. DT, p. 4.1: *de **sngar sa** te* is read as *de **spang** te*. (DPR)

306. DT, p. 4.4: This heading is called the third part (*gsum pa*). However, this does not correspond to the outline structure in *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, so that outline has been used here. (DPR)

307. DT, p. 4.5: This reads *kun gzhir ltas* ("seeing it as the all-basis"). However, the corresponding section of *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, p. 121b.3, says *sku bzhir khyer* ("brought onto the path as the four kāyas"), so that spelling has been followed here. (DPR)

308. DT, p. 4.6: This heading is called the fourth part (*bzhi pa*). However, this does not correspond to the outline in *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning*, p. 123b.6, so that outline has been used here. (DPR)

309. DT, p. 4.2: *sku **gsung*** should be *sku **gsum***. (DPR)

REFERENCE II

INDEX

The index covers only *The Ocean of Definitive Meaning* and the English-Tibetan glossary. Since the appendices serve as summaries, only unique terms used there have been indexed. Glossary entries are in bold.

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